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*For the Christian Observer.*

PSALM CVII.

PROEM.

PRAISE ye JEHOVAH, for he is good,  
For everlasting is his mercy!  
Let the ransomed of Jehovah speak,  
Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the foe;  
And from the nations hath assembled them, 5  
From the east, and from the west; from the north, and from the sea.

NARRATION.

I.

They wandered in the desert, in the pathless waste,  
A city of habitation they did not find;  
Famished with hunger, parched with thirst,  
Their souls within them fainted. 10  
Then they cried unto JEHOVAH in their trouble;  
Out of their afflictions he delivereth them;  
He led them forth by the right way,  
That they might reach a city of habitation.  
Let them praise Jehovah for his mercy, 15  
And his wonders wrought in favour of men;  
For he hath satisfied the craving soul,  
And the famished soul, he hath filled with goodness!

II.

The dwellers in darkness, and the shadow of death,  
Bound in affliction, and in iron; 20  
Because they rebelled against the words of God,  
And the counsel of the Highest they despised—  
Then he humbled with labour their heart,  
They fell down—and there was not a helper!  
Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble; 25  
Out of their afflictions, he delivereth them;  
He led them forth from darkness and the shadow of death,  
And their bonds, he burst asunder.  
Let them praise Jehovah for his mercy,  
And his wonders wrought in favour of men; 30  
For he hath destroyed the gates of brass,  
And the bars of iron hath smitten asunder!

III.

Fools for the way of their transgression,  
And for their iniquities are afflicted;

All food their soul abhorreth, 35

They have even drawn near to the gates of death.

Then they cried unto JEHOVAH in their trouble,

Out of their troubles he delivereth them;

He sendeth his word and healeth them,

He snatcheth them out of their graves. 40

Let them praise Jehovah for his mercy,

And his wonders wrought in favour of men;

And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,

And let them declare his works with rejoicing.

#### IV.

They who descend to the sea in ships, 45

Who prosecute business in many waters;

These behold the works of Jehovah,

Even his wonders in the deep!

He speaketh, and raiseth the spirit of the tempest,

And he exalteth the waves thereof. 50

They climb the heavens, they sink to the abyss,

Their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel and stagger like a drunken man,

And all their wisdom is swallowed up.

Then they cry unto JEHOVAH in their trouble, 55

Out of their afflictions he delivereth them;

He maketh the tempest a calm,

And the waves thereof are still:

Then they rejoice because of the stilness,

And he hath brought them to the haven of their wishes. 60

Let them praise JEHOVAH for his mercy,

And his wonders wrought in favour of men;

And let them exalt him, in the assembly of the people,

And in the council of the elders, let them extol him!

#### CHORAL HYMN.

##### I.

He turneth rivers into a desert, 65

And springs of water into drought;

The fruitful land into saltness,

For the wickedness of them who dwell therein.

##### II.

He turneth the desert into standing water,

The thirsty land into water-springs; 70

And there he causeth the famished to dwell,

And they prepare a city of habitation.

##### III.

And they sow fields, and they plant vineyards,

And they yield fruits of increase;

And he blesseth them, and they multiply greatly, 75

And their cattle he doth not diminish.

##### IV.

And they are minished and brought low by tyranny,

By affliction and sorrow of soul;

He poureth contempt on the tyrants,

And maketh them wander in the pathless waste. 80

## V.

And he raiseth the poor from misery,  
And giveth him families like a flock.  
The righteous behold and rejoice,  
And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

## GRAND CHORUS.

Who is wise? And he will ponder these things,  
And they shall understand the mercies of Jehovah!

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## OBSERVATIONS ON THE 107th PSALM.

This admirable composition is second perhaps to none of the sacred odes, in luminous arrangement, in justness of imagery, in suavity of style, and in all the graces which flow from a happy distribution of subject. It has been classed by Bishop Lowth among the Hebrew Idyls, as distinguished by intercalary verses. And, on a close comparison, it will be found also to resemble the Pindaric ode: some of its divisions bearing no slight analogy to the Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epode of the Greeks; whilst it exhibits a fertility of invention, a quickness of transition, a conciseness and sententiousness of style, similar but superior, to what have been accounted the characteristic excellencies of the Theban bard. We may particularly affirm of this poem, that it is eminently distinguished by that judicious selection, and happy combination, of the most appropriate and natural circumstances, which Longinus ranks among the great sources of the sublime.

This ode naturally distributes itself into three unequal divisions.

I. The Proem, or introduction; inviting the children of Israel to celebrate the manifold mercies of Jehovah.

II. The Narration, or general statement of the subject; which, in four stanzas of similar construction, evinces the goodness of God by his affording present help to those who devoutly seek it: 1. To wanderers in a desert, oppressed with hunger and thirst; 2. to those bound in

prison; 3. to persons languishing in sickness; 4. to mariners in danger of shipwreck.

III. A Choral Hymn of praise, giving a nearer view, and a more minute detail, of those providential mercies which peculiarly respected the children of Israel.

The Proem speaks for itself.

In the Narration, towards the middle of each stanza, there is an *intercalary* couplet, which most beautifully and emphatically marks the transition from extreme distress, to deliverance, and joyful triumph; and which is uniformly followed by two or more lines stating the precise nature, and absolute fulness, of the relief afforded. To this most naturally succeeds another *intercalary* couplet expressing the great end and object of the poem,

“Let them praise Jehovah for his mercy,  
And his wonders wrought in favour of men.”

Each stanza then closes with a *varied* couplet: in the two first recapitulating God's mercy; in the two last, exciting men, by amplified exhortation, to celebrate that mercy.

The Choral Hymn is most judiciously distributed into smaller portions; and is thus at once adapted to a more minute and special detail of circumstances, as well as to the purposes of alternate recitation. That this branch of the poem is in reality a Choral Hymn, I conceive, may be pronounced from the strongest internal evidence. The *praise* of Jehovah is the great object of the sacred poet; he never loses sight of it: the Proem is a most animated and heart-awakening invi-

tation to this *praise*; each succeeding stanza not only renews the invitation, but so affectingly exhibits the divine goodness, that every hearer of common sensibility must feel an inward disposition for acts of *praise*; and the fourth stanza especially, concludes with this requisition of gratitude and joy:

"Let them praise Jehovah for his goodness,  
And his wonders wrought in favour of men;  
And let them exalt him, in the assembly of  
the people,  
And in the council of the elders, let them  
extol him!"

What then could be more natural, what more accordant with the great design of the Psalmist, than that the whole congregation should immediately *break forth in singing*:—that the elders, from their division of the temple, and the people in their places, should alternately chaunt the succeeding quatrains; and that both should unite, with pious exultation, in the concluding couplet, which most emphatically conveys the moral of this noble ode?

It remains to be observed, that in the two first stanzas of the Narration, there are beautiful references to the passage of the Israelites through the wilderness, and to the Babylonish captivity. It is curious, that these great events are absolutely specified in the Chaldee paraphrase; which thus speaks: "Concerning the people of the house of Israel, he prophesied and said, *They wandered in the desert, in the pathless waste,*" &c.; and again; "Concerning Zedekiah, and the princes of Israel, who were captives in Babylon, and *dwelt in darkness, and the shadow of death,*" &c. &c.

These two stanzas, then, confessedly relating to the history and circumstances of the Jewish nation alone; and the two last, no less evidently celebrating those providential mercies, which are common to men of all countries; with what happy fitness is it ordered, that the Choral Hymn should amplify the topics of the two former, as coming

more directly home to the "business and bosoms," to the feelings and the piety of a Jewish congregation? God's general mercies had been already most nobly celebrated; but the special favour of Jehovah, to *his own peculiar nation*, was surely the most appropriate topic for a Choral Hymn of praise, "*in the assembly of the people,*" and, "*in the council of the elders.*"

In the following Notes, it shall be my chief object to remark such beauties as flow from the arrangement and structure of this sacred poem; to point out the nice adaptation and congruity of its parts; to illustrate its exquisitely natural imagery by similar, though generally far inferior, passages from the ancients; in a word, to offer such observations as would probably be made by a commentator on his favourite classic.

#### NOTES ON THE 107th PSALM.

Line 6. "*And from the Sea.*" In the Old Testament, this generally signifies the Mediterranean, which lies *west* of Judea. Here, however, it must signify the Red Sea, which is situated *south* of Judea. See also Ps. lxx. 8, and cxiv. 3.

Line 7. "*They wandered, &c.*" In the vast deserts which bordered on Judea, to wander from the right path, was equivalent to certain death; not only from the pressure of famine, but from the attacks of ravenous wild beasts. In that sublime ode, Deuteronomy xxxii. the first instance of God's providential care, is his finding out Israel in his wanderings:

"He found him in a desert land,  
And in a waste howling wilderness."

Lines 13, 14. "*He led them forth, &c.*" There is a beautiful antithetical parallelism between these, and lines 7, 8, which may be most clearly illustrated, by simply placing them together.

"They wandered in the desert, in the pathless waste,

A city of habitation they did not find :

He led them forth by the right way,

That they might reach a city of habitation."

Lines 17, 18. "*For he hath satisfied, &c.*" The wanderers had been represented (lines 11, 12) so exhausted by the extremity of hunger and thirst, that their very souls inwardly fainted. Thirst, implying the most violent torture, is put last. In this couplet, full relief is afforded to both wants: and, as that which was most grievous was naturally the most *craving*, the order is reversed; *first* the thirsty soul, *then* the famished soul, is completely satisfied. In the structure of this couplet, the original exhibits a beauty, which commentators have not been aware of, and which I have endeavoured not wholly to lose in the present version;—a beauty the more worthy of observation, as it not only frequently recurs in this poem, but constitutes a remarkable feature in Hebrew poetry. Couplets, it is well known, are commonly so constructed, that the lines may be alternately sung by the opposite divisions of the choir. When therefore one line *closes* with an important word, it is so managed, in numberless instances, that the antiphonal line of the couplet shall commence with a word or expression precisely parallel. Which is exactly according to nature; for if you present an object to a mirror, that part of it which is farthest from you, will appear nearest in the reflected image. Here, for example, one side of the choir sings,

"For he hath satisfied the craving soul,"

The other immediately replies,

"And the famished soul, he hath filled with goodness."

Again, at the close of the next stanza, one side sings,

"For he hath destroyed the gates of brass,"

The other answers,

"And the bars of iron, hath smitten asunder."

This construction is peculiarly suitable to the close of a stanza, because it generally enables the writer to leave behind him the impression of a full and complete effect. To exemplify from the two cases just adduced. The rapid succession and duplication of "*the craving soul*, and "*the famished soul*,"—while it marks the extremity of the past affliction, is abundantly counterpoised by the satisfactory termination,

"He hath filled with goodness."

Had the couplet been written thus—

"For he hath satisfied the craving soul,  
And he hath filled with goodness the famished soul,"

it is evident, that the impression of relief would be very incomplete, the idea of famine being suffered to remain behind.

In like manner, had it been written,

"For he hath destroyed the gates of brass,  
And hath smitten asunder the bars of iron,"

it cannot surely be said, that a thorough sense of enlargement would have been produced. The bars would still have been clanking in our ears. But the sacred poet has evinced no less sound judgment, than poetical invention. He has not only caught the most characteristic features of his subject, but arranged his very terms precisely as they should be arranged; and the effect is, that whoever can enter into the spirit of this divine ode, is ready to "*praise Jehovah for his mercy*," because the famished is abundantly satisfied, the captive is completely restored to liberty.

Lines 21, 22. "*Because they rebelled, &c.*" Another example of the same construction which has been just dwelt upon. Though this couplet be not the close of a stanza, the arrangement is here peculiarly proper. The object is, pointedly to express the ingratitude and daring presumption of rebels against their most gracious benefactor; there-

fore the *climax* of their iniquity is reserved for the last,

"And the counsel of the Highest they despised;"—

A distribution most naturally introductive of what follows,

"Then He humbled with labour their heart."

The punishment is made instantly to follow this *aggravated* baseness.

*Lines 27, 28, 31, 32].* Here there is the same happy correspondence between the exigence and the relief, as in the last stanza. Compare lines 19, 20, 23. The antithesis is perfect, but quite unforced and natural.

*Line 33. "Fools, for the way of their transgression."]* Among the Jews, diseases were very commonly sent as a providential chastisement. See especially Deuteron. xxviii. 21, 22. When our Lord had miraculously cured the disabled man, at the pool of Bethesda, he dismissed him with these words—*Ἰδε, ὕγιης γεγονας· μηκέτι ἀμαρτάνε, ἵνα μὴ χειρὸν τι σοι γενήται.* "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest something worse come upon thee." And even under the Christian dispensation, the apostles had the power of miraculously inflicting diseases, and even death, upon offenders. To this St. Paul expressly refers, 1. Cor. xi. 30.

*Line 35. "All food their soul abhorreth."]* This is exquisitely natural. Who that has been confined to a sick bed does not feel its force? The same thought is beautifully amplified, by one of the earliest sacred writers;—

"He is chastened also with pain upon his bed,

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain:

His life abhorreth bread,

And his soul, delicate food:

His flesh is consumed, which was seen,

And his bones stand out, which were not seen:

His soul hath drawn near to the grave,

And his life to the destroyers."

JOB xxxiii. 20—22.

*Lines 37—40].* It would be injus-

tice not to refer to Job xxxiii. 24, 26.

*Lines 43, 44].* In this closing couplet the same structure is not observed, as at the termination of the two last stanzas. And the reason is obvious; this line,

"Let them declare his works with rejoicing, Sends the auditory to *immediate* acts of praise, with joy in their hearts.

How different would be the effect, if the couplet ran thus—

"And let them sacrifice, the sacrifices of thanksgiving,

And with rejoicing, let them declare his works."

The same precept, indeed the same words, are here; but the life and spirit are fled!

*Line 45. "They who descend to the sea."]* "Mare immensum potentiae occultae documentum; ut prorsus, nec aliud ultra, quæri debeat—nec par, aut simile possit inveniri." PLIN.

"The sea is an immeasurable document of unseen power; none beyond it should be sought—neither can any equal or similar be found."

And doubtless this observation is true, if it be limited to the exercise of divine power in the *material* world—with which Pliny was best acquainted, and of which his subject naturally led him to treat.

I cannot deny myself the gratification of here inserting Addison's just and beautiful panegyric on this passage of the Psalmist:—

"As I have made several voyages upon the sea, I have been often tossed in storms, and on that occasion have frequently reflected on the descriptions of them in ancient poets. I remember, Longinus highly recommends one in Homer, because the poet has not amused himself with little fancies upon the occasion, as authors of an inferior genius, whom he mentions, had done; but because he has gathered together those circumstances, which are the most apt to terrify the imagination, and which really happen, in the raging of a tempest. It is for the

same reason, that I prefer the following description of a ship, in a storm, which the Psalmist has made, before any other I have ever met with."

"How much more comfortable, as well as rational, is this system of the Psalmist, than the pagan scheme in Virgil, and other poets, where one deity is represented as raising a storm, and another as laying it? Were we only to consider the sublime in this piece of poetry, what can be nobler than the idea it gives us of the Supreme Being, thus raising a tumult among the elements, and recovering them out of their confusion—thus troubling, and becalming nature?" SPEC. No. 489.

Line 51. "*They climb the heavens, they sink to the abyss.*" It would be easy to accumulate passages expressing the same idea, from *Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, &c.* It is sufficient however to select one, at least as poetical as any that are omitted.

"Tollimur in cœlum curvato gurgite; et  
iidem  
Subductâ, ad manes imos, descendimus  
undâ." VIRGIL, *Æn.* III. 564.  
"To heaven aloft on ridgy waves we ride,  
Then down to hell descend, when they divide."  
DRYDEN.

Too little is here left to the imagination of the reader; the poet has thought it necessary to explain the cause of the ascent and descent, and by so doing, has detracted from the terror of the description. How inferior to the conciseness, the vehemence, the dignified simplicity of the sacred poet!

Line 53. "*They reel and stagger.*" In the following lines there is a more amplified, but less picturesque use of the same image.

"Because of the prophets, my heart is  
broken within me,  
Violently shaken are all my bones:  
I am become as a drunken man,  
And like a man whom wine hath subdued."  
JEREMIAH xxiii. 9.

Lines 57, 58. "*He maketh the tempest a calm.*" This at once re-

minds us of that manifestation of divine power, which clearly evinced our blessed Lord to be indeed the same God celebrated by the Psalmist. I quote St. Mark's description, because it is exactly in the form and spirit of Hebrew poetry; while the parallel passages (*Matt* viii. 26, *Luke* viii. 24) are manifestly prosaic.

Και διεγερθεὶς ἐπέληψε τὸν ἀνέμῳ,  
Και εἶπε τῇ θαλάσσῃ, σιωπα, πε-  
φίμωσο.

Και ἐκοπασεν ὁ ἀνέμος,

Και ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη.

MARC. iv. 39.

"And having arisen, he rebuked the wind,  
And said unto the sea—*peace—be mute!*  
And the wind ceased;  
And there was a great calm."

This surely is matchless. Perhaps the following passage is the nearest approach to it, in any classical author.

"Permitte divis cœtera: qui simul  
Stravere ventos æquore fervido  
Depræliantes; nec cupressi,  
Nec veteres agitantur orni\*."

HORAT. *Od.* ix. Lib. 1.

"Then to the guardian powers divine,  
The cares of future life resign:  
For, when the warring winds arise,  
And o'er the fervid ocean sweep,  
They speak—and lo! the tempest dies,  
On the smooth bosom of the deep.  
Unshaken stands the aged grove,  
And feels the providence of Jove."

FRANCIS.

Lines 63, 64. "*And let them exalt him.*" Apply to this distich the

\* In this beautiful passage one cannot help lamenting that the effect is diminished by want of proper attention to the *collocation* of the words; a blemish the very reverse of the excellence which has been pointed out in the note on lines 17 and 18. Matters should have been so managed, that "*Simul stravere*" should have immediately preceded "*Nec cupressi.*" As it is, we have "the winds warring with the fervid ocean" after the storm has been laid; and whilst this elemental conflict is raging, we are told that not even the sensitive mountain-ash is agitated.

Horace, when he pleases, can arrange his terms far more judiciously. See *ODE* 28. Book I. lines 4—6.

observations in the latter part of the note on lines 17 and 18. Observe too, that, by a different structure, the same end is attained here as in lines 43, 44.

*Line 67. "Into saltness."*] That is, into extreme barrenness. Thus Pliny: "Omnis locus in quo sal reperitur, sterilis est, nihilque gignit." "Every place in which salt is found, is barren, and totally unproductive." And Virgil;

"Salsa autem tellus, et quæ perhibetur amara,  
Frugibus infelix, (ea nec mansuescit arando,  
Nec Baccho genus, aut pomis sua nomina servat),  
Multaque degenerant, succos oblita priores."

GEOR. II. 238.

"Salt earth and bitter, are not fit to sow,  
Nor will be tamed and mended by the plough;

Sweet grapes degenerate there; and fruits,  
declined

From their first flavorful taste, renounce  
their kind." DRYDEN.

Hence, when it was determined to reduce any place to utter desolation, it was customary to sow it with salt. "And Abimelech took the city, and slew the people that was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with salt." Judges ix. 45. Thus, too, we read in the prophet:

"Therefore, as I live,  
Saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel,  
Surely Moab shall be as Sodom,  
And the children of Hammon as Gomorrah;  
A waste of nettles, and a pit of salt,  
And a desolation for evermore."

ZEPHAN. ii. 9.

*Line 69. "He turneth the desert."*] This beautiful imagery is finely expanded by Isaiah. I quote the passage from Bishop Lowth's version.

"The poor and the needy seek for water  
and there is none;

Their tongue is parched with thirst:

I, Jehovah, will answer them;

The God of Israel, I will not forsake them.

I will open in the high places, rivers,

And in the midst of the valleys, fountains.

I will make the desert, a standing pool,

And the dry ground, streams of water."

ISAIAH xli. 17, 18.

*Lines 73—6.]* This quatrain won-

derfully conveys the impression of alertness, alacrity, industrious cheerfulness, and increasing prosperity. The rapid succession of ideas; the happy selection of circumstances; and above all, the close connection of effect with cause, the pious reference of all these blessings to the bounty of the Supreme Benefactor; entitle this passage to rank very high, both in a poetical and moral view.

It need not shrink from comparison with Virgil's celebrated picture of the bustle and activity that Æneas witnessed at young Carthage; into which, it must be observed, the poet introduces at least one feature, that could not have been viewed with complacency by Divine Providence.

"Instant ardentes Tyrii; pars ducere muros,  
Molirique arcem, et manibus subvolvere saxa,  
Pars aptare locum tecto, et concludere sulco,  
Jura, magistratusque legunt, sanctumque senatum.

Hic portus alii effodiunt; hic alta theatris  
Fundamenta locant alii; immanesque columnas,

Rupibus excidunt, scenis decora alta futuris." ÆNEID i. 427—433.

"The Tyrians ply their work; with many a groan

These roll, or heave some huge unwieldy stone;

Those bid the lofty citadel ascend;

Some in vast length, the embattled walls extend;

Others for future dwellings choose the ground,

Mark out the spot, and draw the furrow round.

Some, useful laws propose, and some the choice

Of sacred senates, and elect by voice.

These sink a spacious mole beneath the sea;

Those a huge theatre's foundation lay;

Hew massy columns from the mountain's side,

Of future scenes an ornamental pride."

PITT.

*Line 76. "He doth not diminish."*] That is—he exceedingly increaseth; an instance of the figure which rhetoricians call *Litotes*; see Glassii *Philol. Sac.* p. 801. For a similar instance of the same figure,

See Matt. ii. 6. "*And thou, Bethlehem, art by no means the least, &c.*"—that is, art assuredly the greatest.

Line 79. "*He poureth contempt, &c.*" See Daniel iv. 24—33.

Line 80. "*Pathless waste.*" The word in the original (תהו Tohu) is expressive of extreme desolation; it is the same used Gen. i. 2. in the description of primæval chaos. Bishop Lowth most justly observes, that the meaning and spirit of the images in Hebrew poetry, very frequently depend on a relationship, and, as it were, a familiarity, which *certain words* have contracted with *certain things*. See the conclusion of his *eighth* prælection. With respect to imagery drawn from the chaos, see particularly the Bishop's *ninth* Lecture, first four pages. He there most happily quotes Isaiah xxxiv. 11.

"And he shall stretch over her the line of devastation,

And the plummet of emptiness.—"

תהו, and ברו. The very words of the divine historian, Gen. i. 2.

It may perhaps appear no fanciful conjecture, that these five quatrains have a connected, and chronologically progressive reference to sacred history; and it appears that the topics respectively close with the close of each stanza. The *first*, seems to refer to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which is actually introduced into the text of the Chaldee Paraphrast. The *second*, to the passage through the wilderness, and introduction to the promised land. The *third*, to the settlement, and growing prosperity of the Israelites when completely established in that land. The *fourth*, to their sufferings during the Babylonish captivity, with the divine retribution visited upon their oppressors. And the *last*, to their re-establishment in Judea.

J. J.

# FAMILY SERMONS. No. XIII.

## Mark i. 15.—*Repent ye.*

WHEN John the Baptist came to prepare mankind to receive the Messiah, the main subject of his preaching was repentance; "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:*" in other words, for the Gospel dispensation is about to commence. John having thus prepared the way, Jesus of Nazareth at length began his ministry with declaring, that the kingdom, which John had told them of, was now come. "*The time,*" saith he, "*is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.*" I am come to lay its foundations, and to settle it in the world. And having said this, he informed them of the duties they must perform, or rather of the qualifications they must possess, in order to their being admitted into this kingdom. One of these is the same of which John had told them, "*Repent ye.*" The other was new to them, "*Believe the Gospel:*" that is, believe the glad tidings which I bring of pardon and salvation through my blood. "*Repent, and believe the Gospel.*"

The first thing which our blessed Saviour here enjoins us to do, is to *repent*. This is the first command which he ever laid upon us. How much, then, doth it behove us to consider it with care, lest we should be mistaken as to its true meaning; especially as our Saviour hath not only commanded us to repent, but hath told us in the plainest terms, that "*except we repent we shall all likewise perish.*"

The word in the Greek, which is translated repentance, properly signifies a change of mind, and that from bad to good. It may also be understood to signify the recovery of the mind from infatuation or madness. And thus it is that our Saviour speaks of the repentance of the prodigal son: "*He came to himself.*" He had been, as it were,

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beside himself, but he had now come to his right mind.

Repentance, therefore, is seated wholly within us. It is the recovery of the mind from its former sin and folly; from its distraction about worldly things, and its aversion to holiness and to God; to such a frame and disposition as are wholly averse from sin, and inclined only to God and goodness. It is that grace of the soul, by which, under a deep and affecting sense of the divine mercy, we are made to see, and bewail, and hate our sin; to turn wholly from sin unto God; and to resolve and endeavour to serve and obey him faithfully for the time to come. But to be more particular.

1. If we would obey this first command of our Saviour, our minds must be possessed with a deep sense, not only of the sinfulness of our nature, and of the innumerable sins of our past lives, but of the guilt which we have thereby contracted, and of the punishment to which we have made ourselves liable. It is not enough that we should in words acknowledge ourselves to be "miserable sinners:" we must feel ourselves to be so. We must feel not only that we are sinners in general, but we must be sensible of our particular breaches of the divine law; whether they are sins of ignorance and surprise, or sins wilfully and deliberately committed; whether they consist in the neglect of our duty, or in acts of rebellion against God; whether they are open or secret sins; sins in thought, as well as in word and in act.

2. When our sins have thus been marshalled before our eyes, and we reflect how grievously we have by them offended our gracious God, broken his righteous law, abused his mercies, and incurred his wrath, we should be affected with deep sorrow and hearty contrition. The sense of our ingratitude should press upon our spirits. The remem-

brance of our sins should be grievous unto us, and the burden of them so intolerable, that we should be ready to sink under it, but for the consideration of the mercies of that God, and the merits of that Saviour, against whom our sins have been committed.

3. Here, however, it may be proper to caution you against measuring the depth and sincerity of your sorrow for sin, by the outward expression of that sorrow. For it may, and often does happen, that the mind is overwhelmed with grief when there appear none of those outward signs which generally accompany it. We are not even to regard the acuteness of our feelings as a sure proof of our sincerity. Persons are differently affected in this respect, according to their bodily constitution. The only decisive proof that our sorrow is of the right sort is this; that we had rather suffer the severest affliction than wilfully commit the least sin. We must, therefore, not only see and bewail our sins: we must, also, hate and forsake them: we must be stedfastly resolved to sin no more: we must detest the very thought of what we know to be contrary to the law of God, and turn from it with abhorrence. Whatever comes short of this, how specious and plausible soever it may appear, is not true scriptural repentance. For true repentance consists in nothing less than a sincere forsaking of all known sin unto the utmost of our power. Both Scripture and experience prove to us that men may be convinced of their sins, and in some degree humbled for them, who yet do not truly repent: for remember that repentance is the changing of our minds from evil to good, from sin to holiness, from this world to God. And of this kind must be our repentance, if we would ever taste the happiness of heaven. We must not be content with being a little grieved now and then, with being affected, even to tears, for our sins:

if we would truly repent, we must hate and abandon our most beloved sins: we must be as averse from them as ever we were inclined to them before: for the very essence of true repentance consists in this; that our minds are taken off, as it were, from sin, and fixed on God.

If, then, the view I have taken of this subject be just, it may follow, that a man may leave off the practice of many of those sins in which he formerly indulged, and yet not truly repent of them. Repentance, let it be remembered, has its place in the mind: unless that be changed, though there be a change in the outward life and conversation, there can be no true repentance. It will not necessarily follow, because we no longer commit outwardly certain sins, that those inward lusts and corruptions which gave birth to those sins, are at all mortified and subdued. How many motives, for example, may unite to deter a man from the outward commission of those sins of impurity to which he may formerly have been addicted, while his heart continues to be the seat of impure affections? Suppose, also, a person to have acquired a large fortune by dishonest means; it would surely be no proof of his repentance, that he had at length relinquished his dishonest practices. His heart may be still the same; and he may only want the same occasion, and the same temptation, as before, to lead him to commit again the same frauds.

Let me, therefore, caution you against self-deceit in this matter; against believing that you have repented, when in truth you have not. For, however changed may be your outward conduct, unless your hearts be changed too, I should be unfaithful to your souls if I did not tell you that you have not repented at all. Your chief care, therefore, must be to get your hearts and affections changed and renewed: then the reformation of your lives will follow of course. Do but cleanse

the fountain, and the streams will soon run clear. I do not deny indeed, that one great step to inward purity, is to abstain outwardly from whatever is sinful; and I would most earnestly exhort you to this course. My object is not, as you will easily believe, to make you think lightly of outward sins, or of the importance of abstaining from them. My object is, to warn you against resting here; against stopping short in the work of reformation; against deluding yourself with the notion of your having completed the work of reformation, when in truth you have scarcely begun it. Never, therefore, fancy that you have repented of any sin, merely because you do not commit it now, as you used formerly to do: but rather consider which way your heart is inclined, and whether it is so changed that you hate and abhor the sin now, as much as ever you loved and desired it before, and that you would now be as much grieved, as you ever were pleased, to commit it. Until you experience such a change of heart as this, let no change in your outward conduct delude you into a belief that you have repented; for in fact you have not.

But here it will be proper a little to qualify what I have said, although I feel that I shall be treading on tender ground. What I wish to observe is, that, in order to prove the sincerity of a man's repentance, it is not necessary that he should never fall into sin: for then, what man who ever lived could be proved to be a true penitent? While we continue in this imperfect state, subject to the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil, it is not to be wondered at, if we should sometimes be overcome by these enemies of our souls. But the true penitent, though he may be surprized into sin through inadvertency, or overpowered by the force of temptation, yet rests not in this state. His mind is set on God and holiness: with grief of heart he con-

templates his fall, and bewails the dishonour done to his Saviour; he renews his penitence; he applies with increased earnestness to the Throne of grace for mercy to pardon, and grace to help him. If he sin, he sins not wilfully, or deliberately, or habitually. The main bent and inclination of his soul are towards God; and his greatest grief and burden are, that he should be so far from acting up to what he feels to be his duty, his interest, his happiness, as ever to stray for one moment from the ways of God.

The grand decisive mark of true repentance, I repeat it, is this; that our minds are changed from what they were, so that we now truly hate the sin which once we loved, and truly love the goodness which once we disregarded. If we be truly penitent, we shall not only not commit any known sin, but we shall not willingly omit any known duty; we will not omit to perform any of those acts of service, to cultivate any of those heavenly tempers, to cherish any of those devout affections, which God requires of us. We will not only forsake every evil way; but we will labour, in the strength of divine grace, to do whatever God would have us to do, and to be whatever God would have us to be. This is true, genuine, scriptural repentance; that repentance which needeth not to be repented of; and with any thing short of this, as we value our immortal souls, we ought not to rest satisfied for a single moment.

Having thus explained the nature of repentance, I would say a few words on its necessity. And here, surely, that single expression of our Saviour, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," is sufficient to silence every cavil. Some persons there are in the world, who please themselves with I know not what notion of pardon and acceptance, who yet make little account of that grand work of repentance on which I have insisted. They would represent the painful, heart-search-

ing, self-denying process, which I have stated to be so necessary, as lessening the freeness of the divine grace and mercy in our salvation. But is not repentance also the gift of God, the fruit of his love, the purchase of the Redeemer's blood, the work, the sole work, of his Spirit? For what is repentance but the conversion of the soul; its resurrection from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; its renewal in the Saviour's image? And is not this as much the effect of divine grace; as much the free, unmerited gift of God; as that pardon and acceptance which are promised to the believing penitent, and to him only? I say, to him only; for we can have no ground to expect pardon unless we repent: and though it is not on account of our repentance that we are pardoned, yet we shall never be pardoned without it. There is, it is true, no virtue in our tears, or in our penitence, to wash away either the guilt or the pollution of our sins. Nothing but the blood of Christ can do this. And yet the blood of Christ will never do it, unless we repent:—not that our repentance can add any virtue or efficacy to the blood of Christ; but because he himself hath determined that the virtue of his precious blood shall neither be imparted nor imputed to any but the penitent.

And now, why need I use any other arguments to persuade you to repent? Surely there is not one person present who is not conscious to himself that he has committed many and great transgressions against God; and thus provoked the divine wrath, and made himself liable to all its tremendous consequences. If so, if you perceive your danger on account of sin, surely you will desire nothing so much as to be delivered from it, as to have your sins pardoned and your guilt taken away. And let me tell you, for your comfort, that, however numerous and however great your former sins may have been, yet in and through Christ

they may all be pardoned. But let me remind you, at the same time, that, however few and small your sins may appear to you to be, none of them will be pardoned without repentance. Your Saviour's arms are open to receive you, if you do repent: but if you do not, all he hath done and suffered, all the agony he hath undergone, and all the blood he hath shed, will be of no avail to you. If, therefore, you desire that He that made you should have mercy upon you, you must obey this your Redeemer's command; you must repent.

Let me entreat you, then, to review the whole subject. Consider how many obligations God hath laid you under to perform this duty. Your duty and your interest are indeed here, as they are in every other instance, inseparably united. All the promises, as well as the threatenings, of God; all his merciful, as well as all his afflictive, dispensations; all the truths, and all the precepts, of his Gospel; call upon you with a loud and concurrent voice; bind, I may almost say force you, to repent. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance:" and will not this goodness affect you? Shall God be so earnest, so urgent, and shall you be indifferent? He, it is to be remembered, does not need your repentance; he will receive no increase of happiness, or glory, from your services; nor will your continued rebellions affect the stability of his throne. And yet, mark with what tenderness, with what paternal solicitude, he invites and entreats you to repent, that you perish not. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" To the same end, are the dealings of his providence towards you directed. He visits you with mercies, that he may win you from your sins. He chastens and afflicts you, that you may turn from the lying vanities of

time and sense, to your true and only happiness. He terrifies you with his judgments, that you may escape the ruin which hangs over the transgressor. To this end also he has given you his word to instruct you, his ordinances to edify you, his sacraments to strengthen you. For this end he hath sent his Son to die for you, his Spirit to sanctify you and live within you, and his ministers to urge you to repentance. And if, after all this, you will still continue in sin, you will still refuse to repent and return unto the Lord, your blood will surely be upon your own heads, your destruction will surely be from yourselves.

In the name of that Saviour, therefore, who came down to earth in order to shew you the way to heaven; who laid down his life to redeem yours; who hath told you in plain terms, that "except ye repent, ye must all likewise perish;" let me entreat you to obey this his first command to you. I know you would all wish to be saved; and you profess to expect salvation, only from Jesus Christ. You have heard, then, that he makes repentance indispensable to your salvation. Without this, he himself assures you that you will not be saved, {but must inevitably perish. Therefore, as you value the salvation of your immortal souls, let me once more urge you in his name to break off your sins by repentance and conversion unto God. Say not in your hearts, that God is infinitely merciful, and Christ's merits are all sufficient. This indeed is true; but the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, infinite as they are, will not be extended to you unless you repent and are converted. Lay then this matter to heart. Put not off the work of repentance any longer. Give no rest to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, until you have humbled yourself for your sins before; until, in the strength of divine grace, you have stedfastly resolved to forsake them, to forsake them all, however

pleasing and profitable you may think them; until you turn with the prayer of faith to that Saviour, for whose sake alone you can expect pardon, or any other blessing, from the hands of your offended Father.

Now unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

YOUR correspondent M. F. in your number for November last, p. 700, informs us, that a recent periodical publication, which he does not name, and which has not fallen in my way, asserts, "that the introduction of infant baptism took place in the third and fourth centuries; and that the *only* men, whose character or talents have brought their names to our knowledge, have entered their protest against it." Strange as such assertions will appear to every reader conversant with the early Christian writers, I must assume that M. F. is accurate in his statement. For his satisfaction, therefore, and in order to shew the less informed reader how entirely the publication alluded to is unworthy of his credit, I request you to insert the following remarks.

I understand, then, the publication in question to affirm that infant baptism began to be practised in the third century, and became general in the fourth; and that *all* writers of talents and credit, from Tertullian to the commencement of the fifth century, whose works are extant, enter their protest against the practice. A reader of this publication must conclude, that all these writers had pointedly and unequivocally condemned infant baptism as an innovation which had crept in at the time this publication mentions, and that they considered it as unauthorised and unlawful. But of the greater part of the ancient authors he specifies, I can with confi-

dence affirm, that no decisive conclusion can be fairly drawn from any part of their writings, whether infant baptism was or was not practised in their times, and consequently whether they did or did not approve of it. With respect to them, then, his position is unfounded. On the other hand, some of these writers, so far from protesting against infant baptism as an unauthorised innovation, support it as a lawful and ancient practice. Tertullian, whose unsteady and visionary mind led him to embrace one wild system after another, is not to be attended to in matters of *opinion*: but, on a question of *fact*, he is evidence. Among other still more serious mistakes, he had adopted the notion, that full remission of sins was the sure effect of baptism, but that sins committed afterwards could not easily be forgiven. He therefore proposes, as an improvement, evidently on *received usage*, that "the *delay* of baptism was *more useful*, especially in respect of *infants*;" and asks, "Why does that innocent age hasten to the remission of sins?" \* Now Tertullian flourished in the latter end of the *second* century, before infant baptism had been introduced, if we are to believe the publication in question. But does he attempt to establish his favourite scheme of converting baptism into a kind of extreme unction, by condemning infant baptism as a novel custom begun within his own memory? Why mention a delay in the baptism of infants, if infants had not been hitherto baptised? Tertullian, then, proves that infant baptism had been practised *before* the third century.

In the early part of the third century lived Origen, who also, we are told, protested against infant baptism. In his homily on St. Luke, as translated by Jerome (the original work is not extant), in proof of the doctrine of human de-

\* *Cunctatio baptismi utilior est, præcipue tamen circa parrulos. . . . Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum? De Bap. Ch. 13. 603. Fol. Paris. 1530.*

pravity, he thus quotes the practice of infant baptism: "Infants are baptised for the remission of sins."—"Of what sins?" he then asks, "or at what time have they sinned? or how can there be any reason for this washing in infants, unless according to that sense we have just mentioned? No one is free from defilement, not even if his life has been only one day upon earth\*." And if Rufinus has given Origen's sentiments faithfully, of which we have no just ground for doubt, there is a passage which proves, beyond contradiction, that infant baptism did not first commence in the third century, but, according to Origen, is as old as Christianity. "The church has derived a tradition from the apostles, to administer baptism *even to infants*†."—Is this protesting against infant baptism?

But I have not yet done with this recent periodical publication. Why did he pass over the illustrious names of Cyprian and Augustine? Tertullian, whom he has mentioned, lived before the one, and Eusebius later than the other. Have "their character or talents not brought their names to our knowledge?" When we have heard their testimony, we shall perhaps not be surprised why they were not subpoenaed on this cause. Cyprian was born about the beginning of the third century, and was converted to the Christian faith about the year 246 or 248; that is, about one hundred and fifty years after the death of the last of the apostles. When bishop of Hippo, he presided at a council, where, according to Augustine, sixty-six bishops were assembled. On this occasion they were consulted by one Fidus, whether he ought to defer

the baptism of infants, not till they were adult, but till the eighth day of their age, from respect to the law of circumcision. The reply of the council, which was unanimous, forbade him to defer it so long; adding, that an infant could not be brought to baptism too soon\*. Here, then, we have the concurrence of sixty-six bishops to the propriety of infant baptism, at or before the time when the publication in question affirms that this practice was first introduced, and in a way which shews that they had not a doubt of its being an established custom. Augustine lived at the close of the fourth century. Were I to attempt to quote all that may be found in his works, in confirmation of the practice and propriety of infant baptism, I should far exceed the limits you could allow me. One quotation shall suffice. "No Christian will say that they (little children) are baptised in vain. And if any call for divine authority in this matter, although that which *all the church* holds, and which was not appointed by councils, but has been always in use, is most truly believed to have been transmitted to us by no other than apostolic authority; yet," &c.†.

I have shewn, then, that infant baptism did not take its rise in the third and fourth centuries; that the ancient writers, quoted by the periodical publication, do not "protest" against the practice; that two of them admit its prevalence and allow its propriety, and that one of them ascribes to it an apostolic origin. I have also shewn, that two eminent Fathers, whose testimony the work in question has thought fit to suppress, have proved, beyond the reach of

\* Parvuli baptisantur in remissionem peccatorum. Quorum peccatorum? Vel quo tempore peccaverunt? Aut quomodo potest ulla lavacri in parvulis ratio subsistere nisi juxta illum sensum de quo paulo ante diximus, nullus mundus a sorde, nec si unius diei quidem fuerit vita ejus super terram.

† Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit etiam parvulis baptismum dare.

\* Vid. Cypriani, Lit. ad Fidum, 59.

† Nullus Christianorum dixerit eos (infantis) inaniter baptisari. Et si quisquam in hac re Divinam auctoritatem quaerat: quamquam quod universa tenet ecclesia, nec conciliis institutum sed semper retentum est, non nisi auctoritate apostolica traditum rectissime traditur; tamen, &c. August. de Bapt. Lib. iv. Contra Donat.

reasonable doubt, that, in the beginning of the third century, infant baptism was a general established custom; and that it was considered as coeval with Christianity itself.—Should M. F. wish for further information on this subject, I refer him to the pamphlet which he has quoted\*, or to the larger works of Williams and Wall.

J. G.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

IN reply to the letter of your correspondent X. Y., in your number for September last, I beg leave to state that I do not know of any edict of the Emperor Justinian, promulgated in A. D. 536, respecting the pre-eminence of the Roman pontiff.

The act of that emperor appealed to in the first of the papers which you did me the honour to insert in your publication (see *Christ. Obs.* for 1807, page 703), was the letter written by Justinian to Pope John in the month of March 533. This epistle will be found in the Code of Justinian, lib. i. tit. i., to which I take the liberty of referring your correspondent; who will see, in the same place, the edict of Justinian, upon the occasion of which the above epistle was addressed to the pope, and also one to the patriarch of Constantinople. In the epistle addressed to that patriarch, the pope is called "*caput omnium sanctissimorum Dei sacerdotum*;" and in the letter to the pope himself, Justinian styles his holiness "*caput omnium sanctissimarum ecclesiarum*."

It has been said, that the title conferred by Phocas upon pope Boniface, in A. D. 606, was a higher and more extensive one than the above; and this matter is pretty fully discussed by Mr. Faber, in a paper published in your vol. for 1807, page 148. Having very lately, through the kind offices of a highly respected friend, obtained

a sight of two works of Paulus Diaconus, which contain some mention of the edict of Phocas, I shall, for the satisfaction of such of your readers as may wish to inquire into the subject, transcribe the passages of Paulus Diaconus wherein he mentions this matter. The first is in his work, *De Gestis Longobardorum*, lib. iv. cap. xxxvii.

"Phocas igitur, ut præmissum est, extincto Mauricio ejusque filiis, Romanorum regnum invadens, per octo annorum curricula principatus est. Hic rogante papa Bonifacio statuit sedem Romanæ et apostolicæ ecclesiæ caput esse omnium ecclesiarum quia ecclesia Constantinopolitana primam se omnium ecclesiarum scribebat."

The other passage is in the work of Diaconus *de Gestis Romanarum ad Eutropii Historiam additus*, lib. xvii.

"Hic (Phocas) rogante papa Bonifacio, statuit sedem Romanæ ecclesiæ ut caput esset omnium ecclesiarum; quia ecclesia Constantinopolitana primam se omnium ecclesiarum scribebat."

It appears from these quotations that Phocas bestowed no new title upon pope Boniface, but merely confirmed the title which had been conferred upon pope John, by Justinian, seventy-three years before.

It is also deserving of attention, that the title which the pope still takes, in his official papers, is not that of *universal bishop*, said to have been conferred by Phocas; but that of *head of the church*, which was actually conferred by Justinian.—See, to this effect, a circular letter from the present pope\* to the different cardinals (upon their receiving an order to quit Rome in three days), in the *London Courier* for the 1st June, 1808.—This letter contains the following passage:—"And his holiness, foreseeing this

\* So rapid are the changes now going on, that the person whom I style the *present* pope, is perhaps, before now, hurled from the pontifical chair, and succeeded by Fesch, the uncle of Napoleon.

\* *Infant Baptism vindicated*.—Sold by Rivingtons Hatchard, &c.

case, that after having torn your eminence from his bosom, you might be left at a certain distance from Rome, is of opinion that you should not continue your journey, unless compulsion should be used, to the place designated to you, in order that it may be a matter of public notoriety that your removal from the *head of the church* has not been voluntary but compulsory."

TALIB.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

" 'Tis with our judgments as our watches:  
none

Go just alike, yet each believes his own."

THIS saying of the poet is applicable no less to our religious, than to our other sentiments. Believers and Unbelievers; Churchmen and Dissenters; Trinitarians and Unitarians; Calvinists and Arminians; Quakers, Moravians, and Methodists, profess an almost equal confidence that they are right, and are for the most part sincere in that profession. I have been much amused, Mr. Editor, though a little pained at the same time, in observing how uniformly religious authors, of almost every class, assure the reader in their preface, that it is for the love of truth, and nothing but truth, that they have written. May I be permitted to quote a few passages in illustration of my remark?

Mr. Godwin commences his preface to his *Enquirer*, by announcing that "the writer deems himself an ardent lover of truth," and that his object is "to force her from her hiding-place."—"May the God of truth," says Mr. Towgood, in the preface to his book in favour of the dissenters, "judge between the two parties."—Mr. Lindsey, in the preface to his work in defence of unitarian worship, denominates teachers of his class "ingenuous" persons, who "contribute to spread light and truth through the world."—"To the humble, the candid, the upright inquirers after truth," Mr.

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Fuller, in his book against Socinianism, observes, that "he takes the liberty to appeal."—"I have throughout the whole," says the writer of the preface to the *Exposition of the Doctrine of the Moravian Brethren*, "made truth my great object."—Robert Barclay commences his *Apology for the Doctrine of the Quakers*, by saying, "Forasmuch as that which above all things I propose to myself, is to declare and defend the truth."—"I have sedulously sought for truth," says Mr. Fellowes, "in the sanctuary of the Scriptures."—"As to myself," says Mr. Toplady, in his preface to his work in favour of predestination, "I wish to advance and to halt with the pillar of God's written word."—"I appeal to the Searcher of hearts," says his opponent, Mr. Fletcher, "that I had rather impart truth than receive tithes."—"Truth," says Sir Richard Hill, "makes me confident."—"In the pursuit of truth," says Dr. Haweis, in the introduction to his *Impartial History of the Church of Christ*, "friends and enemies to Christianity, &c. will be candidly considered."—"Nothing to the contrary appearing to me from the side of truth," says Lord Shaftesbury, in his *Characteristics*, "I desire that these presents may pass in the place of a preface; for I am no friend to prefaces."

A superficial observer of these numerous and contradictory claims to the possession of truth, might be tempted by them to become sceptical on the whole subject of religion; an effect which it will be one object of the present paper to obviate. But I shall first deduce a few important inferences which naturally occur.

I begin with remarking, that a strong persuasion of the truth of our religious opinions is no proof that they are sound. Some of the men whose writings I have quoted have been good divines, but they cannot all have been in the right; for many of their doctrines stand opposed to

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each other, and yet all appear to have been confident. Let us not then mistake our own conviction that a thing is true for *evidence* of its truth.

I would here also suggest, that orthodox divines would do well to abstain, somewhat more than many of them are disposed to do, from eager assertions of their own certainty that they are in the right. The enemy can speak thus as well as they; and indeed it not seldom happens that men are, as the poet Cowper has expressed it,

"Most confident, when palpably most wrong."

Let them proceed to the proof.

I would likewise infer, from the passages which have been quoted, that laymen should be a little cautious of believing doctrines on the mere authority of those who teach them. Our instructors may not intend to mislead us: they may feel sure of what they say, and yet they may be in error; and that error may possibly be gross and dangerous. There is something extremely imposing in the preacher or writer who puts his hand as it were on his heart, and seems to pledge his own soul that he is urging what he assuredly knows to be the truth. Nor is a minister to be blamed for occasionally expressing his full belief of the doctrine which he delivers. But let us not forget that scriptural admonition, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." General councils have erred, particular churches have erred, men of distinguished orthodoxy have erred, on particular points; and those in general have been the best and wisest of our race, who have for a time suspended many of their opinions, and have retained a feeling sense of their liability to err even to the last. Contemplate the character of the confident man: he passes with the members of his own little sect for a person of exact orthodoxy and of strong faith. But he is sure, because he is sure; and he is as confident of many

doubtful points, as he is of the plainest and most momentous doctrines. They who once were his opponents have ceased to argue with him, because they have discovered that their reasoning serves only to confirm him in his errors; and his society now consists of only a few fanciful men, who happen to think as he does, and of some servile dependents, who profess what they do but half believe, because they have discovered that hypocrisy of this kind is the road to favour.—Observe, also, that self-sufficient woman. She is weak in her intellects, inconsequent in her reasonings, erroneous in more than half her judgments, and yet impatient of contradiction. She also had once a few opponents, but she now is left to her own silly opinions; and, as she advances in life, she is growing more and more rooted in all her errors, and more and more wise in her own conceits. Many are the opportunities afforded us, as we pass through life, of learning candour from the melancholy consequences attending the signal want of it in our fellow-creatures.

I observed, that we ought to "prove all things." But is there no danger, it may be said, in doing this? May not we err in consequence of the presumption attending this very attempt? And, after all, how shall we know, amidst the endless diversity of judgments, whether we are of the happy number who are in possession of the truth? What is the security that we shall not be deceived? May not we, as so many others have done before us, embrace a cloud instead of a goddess; and, after dreaming through life that we are children of light, at length lie down in darkness? Is not, in short, the search after truth rendered discouraging, and almost hopeless, by the multitude of delusions in the world?

I suspect, Mr. Editor, that there are some young persons, even in the bosom of religious families, who secretly reason in the sceptical man-

per which I have just described. Their scepticism is not avowed, because they are afraid of offending some pious and respected relative, or of setting an example which is allowed to be dangerous. Possibly some of these young persons may have heard the doctrines of the Gospel affirmed, rather than either explained or proved; and they may have a mind naturally more incredulous than that of many round them. They perhaps were inclined, when very young, to embrace the orthodox doctrines, because they perceived them to be believed by their parents; but they have now lived long enough to discover that numerous persons, no less sincere in their way, are of contrary sentiments. Now I would first say to all persons of this class, Be assured that there is such a thing as religious truth. What though many fail to attain it—what though some who possess it are injudicious in their mode of exhibiting it—still the truth itself somewhere exists. Truth, it has been said, lies in a

well; an expression which implies that it does not present itself to every passer-by, and that the diligent alone will detect it in its hiding-place, and draw it forth. “Buy the truth,” says the Wise Man, “and sell it not;” that is, count it so valuable as to be willing to pay the utmost price for it; and, when it is become your own, then do not part with it for any consideration upon earth. It is necessary to set out with such sentiments as these, in order ultimately to succeed in our search.

Assuming the importance of religious truth to be well established in the mind, I shall proceed, in my next paper, to treat of the manner in which it ought to be pursued, and of the evidence which even fallible man may have of his being so happy as to obtain possession of it. Wishing, however, to accommodate my remarks to the case of the general readers of this miscellany, I shall consider myself as addressing only those who acknowledge the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

S. P.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

IT is a melancholy reflection, yet almost every day affords some proof that the proverbial sarcasm, “English suicide,” used throughout the world, is founded on fact. It is not my design at present to inquire into the cause or causes of this effect: but, through the medium of your publication, to suggest to the consideration of civilians, ecclesiastics, and members of the British legislature; Whether any mode can be adopted to prevent or lessen so dreadful an evil, which so materially affects, not only families, but the nation at large?

Our ancestors seem to have con-

sidered the crime of suicide with proper horror and detestation; and therefore affixed to it a peculiar stigma. They looked upon it as a species of the worst felony: and so the term *Felo de se* is defined to be “one who commits felony by murdering himself.”

No man has a right to take away his own life: that belongs to Him who gave it. Our body, as well as our soul, is his property; and is entrusted to us to be used for that end for which he gave it. I desire to have a true definition of madness or insanity. A madman frequently attempts to kill other persons who come in his way; but I doubt if any case can be produced, where

he attempted to kill himself. Some men will sit down coolly, and write a note or letter to a friend, or leave it for the information of their family, intimating what they intend; and shortly after blow out their brains, or take away their life in some other way: and then it is said that they were *insane*, or deranged in mind. I grant that every sin wilfully committed against God, our neighbour, or ourselves, is an abuse of our mental powers, or, if you please, a derangement of mind. But, when a man can sit down (as before observed) and write a letter with grammatical accuracy, or according to common orthography, I apprehend that he has the use of his mental faculties; and therefore I wish to see the term *insanity* defined more properly and accurately in law.

Two cases have lately occurred, which I beg leave to mention for the serious consideration of your readers; and hope that some of them will enter into a calm and unprejudiced discussion of the subject, and communicate their thoughts to the public through the medium of your excellent publication.

A man some months ago took a quantity of laudanum to destroy himself; but medical assistance being called in, and an emetic used, he recovered. Some time since, he and his wife separated, and lately he drowned himself in the New River. An inquest was called, and the verdict was brought in *accidental death*!—Are not such inquests awfully ludicrous, or an insult upon common sense?

Another man, who had bought a ship in some part of the North, and sailed up in her to London, began to think that he had made a bad bargain; and, during the passage, was heard to use words to that effect; but after he had arrived in the river, one night he cut his own throat in his cabin. The mate, who had been asleep, hearing some noise or a groan, arose, and, getting a light, found him dead. The coroner sum-

moned a jury, as usual; and directed them to give a verdict of lunacy or insanity (according to the modern mode of our day): and though a few witnesses were called, yet he put the questions to them in such a way, as to suggest the answers which they should make. Two of the jury, indeed, had courage and honesty enough to expostulate with him, and to dissent: but he said the case was “only the effect of a coloured fancy,” and then put the question to a vote, to be determined by a shew of hands, and carried it by a majority.

Now, I ask, is it not necessary that the jury should be *unanimous* in this case, as well as in other courts of judicature, where they are called to give in their decision upon oath? Is not every juryman bound, by the law of conscience, and by the law of the land, to investigate every question that comes before him, and most scrupulously to interrogate witnesses; and then to judge according to the best light he has, and the evidence produced? Has any coroner, or indeed any judge, a right to brow-beat a jury; or will he presume to over-rule their conscience? Where is the use of administering an oath to men, if they are directed to act contrary to that oath?

Are there no spirited men to be found at this day, who will rise up for the honour of *England*, and use their best endeavours to prevent, or at least to lessen, the contagion which is diffused more and more throughout our land, lest we become a bye-word among the nations? But, alas! I fear that Sadducean principles have been so generally imbibed, that few men will endeavour to invent or prescribe a remedy for a disease, which operates upon thousands on every little disappointment in life.

When a man commits a crime against the state, or any individual of the community at large, he is liable to be punished according to the existing laws: but what pu-

nishment can be inflicted here upon him, who has *already* taken away his own life? Though we can inflict no farther pain or punishment upon him, yet perhaps some mark of infamy might be attached to his memory, which, though not immediately felt by *him*, might be a mean of deterring others from perpetrating a like horrid deed, or of impeding, in some measure at least, the torrent which is sweeping the face of our gloomy land! Men are often influenced by a principle of pride, even when they pay no regard to morality or religion. A gambler will pay what he terms "a debt of honour," when he shamefully refuses to discharge what has been long and justly due to an honest and industrious tradesman. Many instances of this kind frequently occur, and might be mentioned.

It seems that some greater mark of disgrace and abhorrence should be attached to a self-murderer, than what is usually assigned by law to the act of *Felo de se*: and it should be expressed in the strongest and most opprobrious terms that human language can afford, or the wisest of men can suggest. A traitor to his king and country is justly stigmatized with every sign of detestation; and if he had any title of honour or nobility, he is degraded, and his coat of arms broken even before his execution. In like manner, a military officer or general, who turns poltroon or betrays an army, is degraded with such marks of infamy as the king, or the court-martial by which he is tried, shall think fit. But what term of reproach or epithet shall we affix to a self-murderer; one who dishonours God, and turns a very coward in the cause of reason and religion, at a time when he ought to stand forth as a valiant soldier, and play the man?

I have somewhere heard, or read, that, at a certain period, many of the women of *Sparta* murdered them-

selves. A law was then made, that the body of every woman who killed herself, should be exposed naked in the streets; which immediately put a stop to the phrensy. And some persons, adverting to this, have thought, if a law were made, and rigorously executed, that the body of every self-murderer, whether lord or peasant, shall be hanged in chains, that the *English mania* would soon cease. Perhaps another idea may be suggested, which, however ludicrous it may appear, would certainly have a wonderful effect. I have seen the skin of a malefactor stuffed and preserved in the anatomical lecture-room in a college. Let the bodies of self-murderers be flayed, and the skins stuffed and hung up in a large exhibition-room, with the names and titles under each. As this age is famous for exhibitions, if any person would make a collection of this kind (and a large one might easily be made in a few months), he would find it much more lucrative than that at Exeter 'Change, or even at Somerset-House.

But, to be serious:—The writer of this paper merely throws out these few hints, entreating the thinking part of your readers to turn the subject in their mind with attention, and try if any better regulations, can be adopted, in giving a verdict at a coroner's inquest, than what we usually find upon such occasions at the present day: for the modern mode, instead of lessening or preventing the evil, manifestly tends to increase it. There will, doubtless, be various and opposite opinions upon the subject; but from the result of the whole, some tolerable decision may be formed, which may tend to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. England has often produced great and philosophic men, who enacted many wise and salutary laws: and shall not some be found at this time, who will combine their efforts to do something, in the case before us,

for their own credit, and for the good of posterity, and especially to wipe away so great a stigma from their native land?

K<sup>g</sup>ε<sup>ι</sup>τ<sup>ω</sup>ν.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

ALTHOUGH the apprehension, which was entertained in the course of the last autumn, of an approaching scarcity, may be considered as removed, you will probably not deem it unseasonable to insert a few observations on the means of diminishing the sufferings which must always necessarily attend such a calamity. In this country, a scarcity may arise either from the failure of foreign supplies, or from a deficiency in our own crop, or from both these causes combined. This year, from all the inquiries which I have made, I am led to conclude, that we have no deficiency in our own produce, taking the whole country together; and the scarcity, therefore, which we were led to expect, would have been wholly, or at least chiefly, the result of that situation of things which it was apprehended would put a stop to the importation of foreign grain and flour. But though our fears on this point have happily proved groundless, it may still be of use to consider in what way a scarcity, so produced, will operate, and how its pressure may be relieved. The corn brought to market being inadequate to the demand, a competition will take place among the purchasers, till the price is so far raised as either wholly or partially to exclude from the market those who are unable to pay that price. The advance of price will not, as in articles of luxury, produce retrenchment among the consumers in general: those who are able, will purchase to the same extent as formerly (that is, unless they limit their consumption from conscientious motives); those who cannot give the advanced price, will be excluded. The consequence which follows is,

that those, who before had only a bare subsistence, are reduced to live on what is insufficient for their support. The remedy for this evil to which recourse is commonly had—a contribution for purchasing bread, and distributing it at reduced prices—though right in conjunction with another measure which I am about to recommend, is injurious, or at best nugatory, if singly adopted. It introduces into the market a new set of purchasers; it increases the demand, without augmenting the supply; and thus produces one of two effects: either a larger quantity is bought and consumed, and thus the dearth converted into a famine; or the price is raised, the consumption remains as before, and, instead of the most poor, those who are raised one step above them, and who might, but for this interference, have been able to purchase for their necessary consumption, suffer in their turn total or partial exclusion. Thus misery, if not increased, will only be transferred; while no one, but the holders of corn, will feel any real benefit.

From these observations I would draw this conclusion: that every measure for the relief of the poor, in times of scarcity produced by the loss of imported supplies, should be accompanied with a retrenchment of all unnecessary consumption. Where the supply is inadequate to the demands both of necessity and of luxury, the calls of necessity can in no other manner be answered than by denying those of luxury. The ingenuity of different persons will suggest to them different means of retrenchment: among the more obvious are the sacrifice of pastry, and the use of rice and potatoes, in various shapes, as substitutes for pastry, or in part for bread. But, I apprehend, the most extensive saving would be effected by the adoption of household bread, or of bread partly consisting of rye or potatoes, in lieu of wheaten bread. The adoption of this system would have

this further beneficial effect, that the poor would be led, by the example of their superiors, to be satisfied with household bread; at least to accept it in times of scarcity, when distributed gratuitously, or at reduced prices. They have been known to refuse it: but those who really wish to diminish the effects of a scarcity should pertinaciously adhere to the determination of not giving fine wheaten bread; and this they may do with a good grace if they abstain from consuming it themselves.

The effect which retrenchment, combined with charitable distribution, must necessarily produce, is evident. The buyers are changed, but the *whole demand* is not materially increased: the augmented consumption in one class is counteracted by the diminished consumption in another: the poor, therefore, are relieved, without increasing the pressure on those who are but just above the necessity of applying for relief; without incurring the hazard, by a premature consumption, of finally converting a dearth into a famine. Or, to put it in another point of view, the deficiency of the supply is met, not by the absolute starvation of the *poor*, but by a *general diminution* of consumption among *all* ranks of society.

We have spoken of the distribution of *bread* among the poor; this has been merely that the argument might be more distinctly perceived; for the same reason which requires the retrenchment of all superfluous consumption among the rich, points out also the necessity of introducing substitutes for fine flour among all ranks of society. Those who distribute provisions to the poor, should give soups, potatoes, rice, with a smaller quantity of bread than would otherwise be necessary.

What has been said must be confined to the case of a scarcity arising from the interruption of foreign supplies. Where it is caused by a failure of our crops, while our foreign intercourse continues open, the ob-

vious remedy for the *deficiency* is importation, while charitable distribution will relieve the pressure of the *high prices*. Retrenchment in such a case is perhaps unnecessary, and may even be impolitic. The rise in the price of corn is, to a certain extent, necessary to indemnify the farmer for the deficiency of his crop; and, when it exceeds what is required for that purpose, it encourages importation, and thereby corrects itself. The superfluous consumption of grain *in general* is a benefit to the country, by encouraging the production of a larger quantity of it than would otherwise be grown, and thus enabling us the better to meet a scarcity, and to be less dependent on foreign supplies.

Φίλος.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

I was much surprised with the extract, in your number for October last, from the minutes of the Methodist Conference, respecting the right of females to dispose of themselves in marriage. Nor were my objections at all satisfied by Mr. Benson's answer to your remarks; for, though a woman myself, I can by no means see what circumstance can free a woman from subjection to parental authority in things lawful. Suppose a truly pious woman, the child of ungodly parents, to have an eligible offer of marriage from a truly pious man, and that his religion is the only ground on which they object to the union: she might probably, and by very plausible arguments, very readily persuade herself, if her inclination favoured it, that it was her duty to marry. But would it therefore be so? Though she may undoubtedly refuse to marry an ungodly man, because that is clearly unlawful, yet, as there is no sin in continuing single, surely it is in such a case her duty to submit to the will of her parents as the disposal of Providence, leaving the matter in his hands; be-

cause, if she believe the hearts of all in his keeping, and all events at his disposal, she may be certain that, if he see fit, he can alter the mind of her parents, and in many ways bring to pass her wishes; or if, on the other hand, the event should shew that it was God's will she should remain single, she may find many ways of rendering herself useful in her generation, and will certainly much more recommend the Gospel to her mistaken relatives than by an act of disobedience.

I do not write this from any desire of appearing in print, but because I think the subject highly interesting, and know that those who have tried can alone tell how far a sincere mind may be bewildered by false ideas of duty, even when inclination draws a different way. If, therefore, any of your abler correspondents will give these ideas to the public in a better dress, they will greatly oblige one who has no wish to prevent the happiness of any woman, but can say, from her own experience, that the path of duty, even when most perplexed with trial, is far, *far* both safer and easier, than any crooked path, however specious.

A CONSTANT READER.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

I AM a great lover of music, especially sacred music; but as I am not satisfied of the propriety of gratifying myself by attending musical performances in consecrated places of public worship, I request that you, or such of your correspondents as may have maturely weighed the matter, would give your opinion upon the subject. I know that this would be very acceptable to many of your readers. It is not my intention to trouble you with entering farther into the question, than to ask,

1. Whether, since an habitual veneration for those places where

we assemble to worship Almighty God naturally prepares the mind for the duties there to be performed, the use of these places for what is little more than the gratification of the senses does not weaken that veneration; and whether this be expedient in an age by no means characterised by superstition?

2. Whether, since mere amusement is generally the chief object in view with those who attend these musical performances, it be lawful to convert consecrated places of worship to such purposes? We have laws which forbid the sports of children even within the precincts of the temple.

3. Whether, since gain is commonly a main object on these occasions, the sentence our Saviour passed upon those who sold oxen, &c. in the temple, is not applicable to those who make use of the house of God in order to attain that object?

4. Whether, though to support some charitable institution by the use to which that gain is applied, the same sentence of our Saviour is not equally applicable? The money-changers, and they who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, in the court of the temple, occupied that place only for the accommodation of those who came from distant parts to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice in obedience to the express commands of God.

I have been led to consult you upon this subject, from considering two (I hope unusual) circumstances attending one of these musical performances in the church, at a place where I lately happened to be, and where a musical festival was then held for the purpose of contributing to the support of a very valuable establishment. One of these circumstances was, that, in order to prepare the church for the musical entertainment, the daily sacrifice, the morning and evening prayers, were suspended for three weeks. The other, that for the accommodation of as great a number as possible of amateurs, or, if you please, of per-

sons actuated by charity, a gallery was erected over the altar, which was so beset with the timbers necessary for supporting the gallery, that the regular monthly sacrament of the Lord's Supper could not be administered, and was not administered.

These two circumstances, together with an observation made, that several persons of high Christian profession encouraged the performance by attending it, have determined me to write to you. Perhaps these persons may not have been fully satisfied of the propriety of their conduct; or perhaps they may not have considered the matter at all. If they have not considered it, I beg you will call their attention to it; and even if they have, on this occasion, suffered inclination to decide upon a doubtful point, I am confident, if they really be the characters represented, that they will pay due regard to your suggestions.

PHILO-MUSICES.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

If the following has not yet appeared in your valuable miscellany, and you think it worthy of insertion, it may be interesting to your readers to hear the sentiments of a celebrated foreign bishop, of the last century, with regard to frequenting theatres.

In his sermon "On the small Number of the Saved," the worthy prelate (Massillon) thus addresses his audience:—"You continually demand of us, if theatres and other places of amusement be innocent recreations for Christians? In return, I have only one question to ask you, Are they the works of Satan, or of Jesus Christ? for there can be no medium in religion. I mean not to say but what many recreations and amusements may be termed innocent: but the most innocent pleasures which religion allows, and which the weakness of our nature renders even necessary,

belong in one sense to Jesus Christ, by the facility with which they ought to enable us to apply ourselves to more holy and more serious duties. Every thing we do, every thing we rejoice or weep at, ought to be connected with Jesus Christ, and done for his glory. Now, upon this principle, the most incontestible and most universally allowed in Christian morality, you have only to decide whether you can unite the glory of Jesus Christ with the pleasures of a theatre. Can our Saviour take any part in such a species of recreation? And before you enter a theatre, can you with confidence declare to him, that, in so doing, you only propose his glory, and the satisfaction of pleasing him? What! are the theatres—such as they are at present, still more criminal by the public licentiousness of those unfortunate creatures who appear on them, than by the impure and passionate scenes they represent—are the theatres the works of Jesus Christ? Would Jesus Christ animate a mouth from whence are to proceed sounds lascivious, and calculated to corrupt the heart? But these blasphemies strike me with horror! Would Jesus Christ preside in assemblies of sin, where every thing we hear weakens his doctrines; where the poison enters the soul by all the senses; where every art is employed to inspire, awaken, and justify the passions he condemns? Now, says Tertullian, if they are not the works of Jesus Christ, they must be the works of Satan. Every Christian ought therefore to abstain from them: when he partakes of them, he violates the vows of baptism. However innocent he may flatter himself to be, in bringing from these places an untainted heart, it is sullied by being there; since by his presence alone he has participated in the works of Satan, which he had renounced at baptism, and violated the most sacred promises he had made to Jesus Christ and his church."

C. W.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

HAVING been employed for some months past in arranging and collating the Oriental Manuscripts in the public library of the university of Cambridge, brought by the Rev. Dr. Buchanan from the *East*, and by him presented to the university, I propose to give some account of them, or such of them as may be interesting to the readers of the *Christian Observer*. I presume, sir, the communication of such notices will not be remote from the design of your publication.

These manuscripts are chiefly *Biblical*, and are written in the Hebrew, Syriac, and Ethiopic languages. They were all collected by Dr. Buchanan in India. The Hebrew manuscripts were obtained from the Black Jews, who have had settlements in India from time immemorial, and are now found in numbers about Cochin. These Jews differ in many respects from those of other countries, and bear evident marks of descendants from those ancient dispersions we read of in the Sacred History: they call themselves *Bene Israel*. They have the Hebrew Pentateuch, but scarcely know of any other books of Scripture. A copy of the Hebrew Pen-

tateuch, written on goat-skins, and found in one of their synagogues, is in the Buchanan collection. The Syriac manuscripts were collected from the Syrian Christians in Travancore and Malayala, where a race of Christians has existed ever since the apostolic times: and the native Indian Christians bear the name of Christians of St. Thomas to this day. They have the whole Bible, and other books not in our canon, extant in the Syriac language, and theirs is perhaps the purest of all the versions of Scripture now known. There is, in Dr. Buchanan's collection, a copy of the Bible, containing the books of the Old and New Testament with the Apocrypha, written on large folio vellum, and in the ancient or *Estrangelo* character, and which was a present to Dr. Buchanan from Mar Dionysius, the Archbishop of the Indian church. But though all these MSS. were brought from India, they were not all written in India; some were written at Antioch, Mesopotamia, and other parts of Syria, Asia, and Africa. For your next number I shall transmit you some remarks on several articles of this Oriental collection. I am, &c.

T. YEATES.

Cambridge, Dec. 21, 1809.

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## REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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*The History of the Church of Christ. Volume the Fourth, Part II. Containing a Continuation of the Sixteenth Century. On the Plan of the late Rev. Joseph Milner.* By the Rev. ISAAC MILNER, D. D. F. R. S. Dean of Carlisle, and President of Queen's College, Cambridge. London: Cadell and Co. 1809. 8vo. pp. xiv. 409—1168, and 29.

OF the former part of this volume, we gave an account in our own volumes for the years 1803 and 1804.

At that time we considered the whole work, of which a portion only was then before us, as so important in the design, and so happy in the execution, that we felt ourselves called upon to discuss and exhibit the merits of those volumes which had made their appearance before we had assumed a critical existence. We are gratified by the opportunity now presented to us of resuming our labours on this able and interesting production, which, in the portion at this time offered to the pub-

lic, carries on, as the title-page professes, the history of the sixteenth century. The period contained is from the year 1520 to that of 1530, about ten years, a comparatively short space of time, but full of the most important and critical incidents, such as almost every great cause experiences, when it is in progress, and contending with a more powerful opponent; when every separate instance of conflict may be decisive to its destruction, but cannot be so to its establishment; and when only a series of victories can set it on a firm and permanent basis. This period opens with that decisive measure by which the pope so unwillingly and irretrievably committed himself, the publication of a formal and inveterate bull against the bold and heretical reformer; and it closes with the convention of the diet of Augsburg (of which, however, a full account is reserved for the ensuing volume), when the Lutheran faith was reduced to an explicit form, and in that form both publicly professed at the time, and ever since recognised, as the authorised confession of the Lutheran churches. It might be anticipated, that, short as is the period just mentioned, and extensive as is the surface over which it is expanded (the present volume containing near eight hundred pages), the materials of Dr. Milner's History have by no means been made the most of. No unnecessary or impertinent efforts of amplification have been resorted to, in order to swell the volume to its present bulk; but it has attained it, we have reason to believe, by the simple accumulation of matter, which, in the author's opinion (and we apprehend his readers will not dissent from him), was too important not to find a place. The fulness of this, as well as the former volumes of the History before us, arises, in a great measure, from its mixed character. It partakes largely of biography; a circumstance which necessarily followed from its distinguishing design, as far as car-

ried into execution; which was, to exhibit the proper and most important operations of Christianity in those who professed it, and in whom its genuine influence was felt. These can only be adequately discovered, at least are most effectually traced, in individuals; and, where time and providence have spared any documents exhibiting the private character, judgment, and feelings of individual Christians, these are the materials of which a historian of the spiritual church of Christ is most anxiously in quest, and will most diligently avail himself. The paucity and corruption of these materials, in the earlier ages of Christianity, is a subject of deep regret; and in proportion to that regret, is the pleasure with which we reflect upon the abundance and evident genuineness of such materials in the period of next importance to that of the origin of Christianity, its reformation. Every protestant who has the good sense to nauseate the anilities, and the humanity to shudder at the barbarities of that spiritual power, from which the efforts of Luther and his associates were instrumental in delivering large portions of Europe; who contemplates the insidious exertions so sedulously employed to disparage the cause of protestantism, or to neutralise its distinctive merits, either by decided unbelievers, open or secret, or by those with whom all religious consideration weighs but as a feather against a contingent political advantage; will welcome, not only as intrinsically excellent, but as highly seasonable, a History like the present, which exhibits the great revolution in question in its real character, and which detects and disperses the calumnies respecting it, which have gained currency under the cover of plausible generalities, principally by entering into a detail, which brings the decision to every man's own bosom, and only requires him to determine whether the professions which he reads, circumstanced as they are, are, or are not,

sincere. It is observed by Cowper, that none but Christians can fully enter into the beauties of Milton; and it is not too much to add, that they alone are the persons qualified to understand and decide upon the merits of the reformation. An infidel is a total stranger to the feelings of a Christian: but although he cannot understand what is meant by them, when professed, he can easily understand that they may be professed hypocritically: if any motive should induce *him* to make such profession, he is conscious that it could not be otherwise than hypocritical. In his misconceptions, therefore, and misrepresentations, of the facts which constitute the reformation, he is not reduced to the necessity of a pure and entire violation of truth; for his own experience supplies him with some apparent probabilities in support of the conclusion to which his inclination leads him.

But with respect to the seasonableness in particular of the present publication, let the author be heard for himself.

"Several persons, and even some of our leading senators, suppose that popery has long since been abundantly meliorated. But I wish they may not be nearer the truth who think that the spirit of protestantism has sadly degenerated. Both these points may receive much illustration from that part of this history which is yet unfinished. In the mean time the true nature and character of protestantism, as well as of popery, ought to be carefully examined, and ascertained with all possible accuracy. And for this purpose the diligent study of the same memorable period, and especially of the first eight years of it, from 1517 to 1525, will be found peculiarly useful. During these years, Luther stood almost alone; and the documents contained in this volume will leave no doubt on the mind of the inquisitive reader, as to the real motives by which he was actuated. Then the doctrines of Luther are well known to be, in the main, the doctrines of every branch of the protestant reformation. These, with the rapidity of lightning, penetrated almost every part of Europe; became the fruitful source of various Christian institutions and establishments; and, as hitherto they were supported rather by the

blood of martyrs, than the power of princes and prelates, they beautifully exhibit the native vigour of the reviving Church of Christ." Pref. pp. xii., xiii.

We now proceed to the history itself.

In the extended and interesting account which Dr. Milner has given of two of the most conspicuous documents concerning the reformation in the year 1520, namely, the letter which Luther was prevailed upon to address to Leo X., for the purpose of producing a reconciliation, and the bull which that pope fulminated against the reformer, we cannot help wishing that the author had settled, as he was eminently qualified to do, the chronological difference which has prevailed, from the first existence of these documents, with respect to their respective dates. Seckendorf had, in our opinion, decidedly proved, that the bull was actually prior to the letter; although reasons existed which induced Luther to put an earlier date to his letter: a circumstance which misled even the first protestant writers, and has been improved by papal ones into an argument to justify the severity of the bull. Dr. Milner, by the place which he has assigned to these productions, has contributed to confirm the error. The *before* and *after* of consecutive events is the very soul of truth in history; and a violation of chronological order is of itself often productive of serious falsehood. Even in cases, when this effect is not to be apprehended, accuracy in the notation of time is far from being beneath the regard of any historian. We observe, too, that only sixty days are mentioned in the bull, whereas the time allowed the reputed heretic in which to retract his errors, and escape the penalties suspended on that condition, was an additional sixty days, making 120 in all. Both Sleidan and Fra Paolo have committed the same oversight. But any one who will be at the pains to consult the bull itself, which is extant in Luther's Works, in

Pfaffii Introduct. in Hist. &c., and in other works, will perceive it to be an oversight. However, that, at any rate, this bull was not produced by Luther's letter, but was long before determined upon, is placed beyond all reasonable doubt from the single circumstance, that, in a letter of Giulio, Card. de Medici (afterwards Clement VII.), to Card. Bibiena, dated from Rome, March 27, 1519, the writer says of Cajetan—"Il legato vuole, che Fra Martin Lutero si condanni in ogni modo, o' l'opere sue\*.

As it would be scarcely practicable to abridge the present history within any thing of a moderate compass; so neither have we thought it necessary or advisable to notice every passage deserving of attention, either on account of the intrinsic importance of the incidents recorded, or the manner of recording them, or the improvement deduced from them. Only readers of the work (and such we apprehend most of *our* readers have been, or will be) can form any conception of the difficulty to which we should have been reduced, had this been our plan. This, however, is the general propensity of reviewers; and we have been obliged to resist it in no common degree, in order to keep ourselves within due limits. But the following passage, as it impressed upon our minds a more striking sense of the value of the present volume, we cannot refuse ourselves the satisfaction of transcribing.

"Who can doubt, that there might be made a most valuable selection of instructive facts and circumstances relative to the expulsion of ignorance and superstition, and the first appearances of evangelical light, during the former part of this century, among the different nations of Europe? Much time, however, and perseverance, would be requisite for the execution of such a work. Many of the necessary authentic documents lie almost buried in obscurity

and oblivion: and as they have not been judged proper for general history, or even worthy of it, the difficulty of collecting them increases every day." p. 671.

The following observations had perhaps a greater degree of interest attached to them at the time they were written than now: but they have still their importance; indeed their importance is permanent. They discover likewise a spirit of moderation and candour, which are deserving both of praise and of imitation.

"As the terms Helvetic and Calvinistic denomination have been mentioned, and as even at this day the meaning of the words Calvinist and Calvinistic supplies matter for much dispute, and even contention, among religious persons, it may not be improper briefly to advertise the reader, that in the origin of these denominations, as distinguished from the Lutheran, there really existed no material difference of sentiment; at least this is true so far as the religious practice of fallen creatures, and their recovery of the lost image of God in this world, and their eternal salvation in the next, depend upon a just application of the salutary remedies of the Gospel. It is one of the most mournful events attending the reformation, that historical truth and method should require us to mention at all the difference here alluded to. Such as it was, it had, as yet, hardly appeared with perspicuity; but in the year 1524, and the several succeeding years, it grew into a tedious and violent controversy concerning the manner in which the body and blood of Christ is present in the Eucharist. This dispute, which has been called the sacramentary contest, after producing the most deplorable animosities, terminated at length in a fatal division of those sincere friends of the reformation, who had embarked in the same cause, and who equally professed the essentials of godliness. The differences of sentiment among the contending parties were frequently indistinct, and almost entirely verbal; and if the Church of Christ could be viewed abstracted from every secular connection, such niceties would scarcely deserve a moment's consideration. But Christians must class themselves with some communities, and are therefore compelled to give peculiar attention to the distinguishing features of that denomination to which they belong. Happy! did they but learn to do this in a spirit of candour and charity!

\* See the first volume of the *Lettere di Principi*.

And happier still! did they employ their zeal, their firmness, and their perseverance, in defending the foundations of religion, in imitation of St. Paul, who would not give place to false brethren by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Galatians." p. 731—733.

At p. 772 commences an account of the Sacramentarian Controversy, in which Luther had the misfortune, not only to embrace the erroneous side, but to be opposed by adversaries nearly equal to him in his better qualities, and superior to him in his worst. The violence and fanaticism of Carolstadt, his first opponent on this question, so far from being calculated to produce a conversion in his opinion, were not even adapted to moderate it. Had some of the more moderate and able opponents of this reformer been the first parties in the controversy, there is little doubt that the good sense, the candour, and humility of Luther would have led him to settle into a very different opinion concerning the sacrament in question, from that which he so irrationally adopted, and so obstinately persisted in. But these individuals unhappily made their appearance after the reformer had committed himself; and motives distinct from the merits of the cause, but often associated with them, had established him in the opinion which he at first adopted. These persons likewise laboured under the further disadvantage of appearing as the partisans of Carolstadt. But although it is in this deplorable controversy that the character of Luther suffers its worst stain, it was productive of this advantage, as far as Carolstadt was concerned, that it discovered how far removed the Saxon reformer was from fanaticism; as the part which he took respecting the anabaptists proved his abhorrence, both of sedition on the one hand, and of persecution on the other. Dr. Milner, who sustains the character both of the admirer and censor of Luther, has introduced the subject of the

Sacramentarian Controversy with these judicious remarks.

"In the year 1524 there arose among the friends of the reformation a tedious and fatal controversy respecting the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Luther had rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, but maintained, nevertheless, that along with the elements of bread and wine the real body and blood of Christ were received by the partakers of the Lord's Supper. It is a memorable instance of human imbecility, that a man, who had risen superior to the habits and prejudices of education in so many other respects, and who, through the grace of God and the instruction of the written word, had been more completely emancipated from vulgar and fashionable absurdities than any mere philosopher in any age had ever been, should in this single point remain so unreasonably attached to the opinion which he had imbibed in his youth. Our astonishment is increased by this circumstance, that he could allow the Scriptural expressions to be consistent with the admission of the REALITY of the elements according to the plain testimony of our senses, and yet should think that those same expressions do still imply that the partaker of the real bread and wine does also partake at the same time of the material substance of Christ's human body. Thus, however, the advocates for the doctrine of CONSUBSTANTIATION must argue. And the case before us shews, that great men are not so in all things; and that it is never wise to adhere implicitly to the authority of mere fallible men as teachers.

"Carolstadt was, in this point, the open antagonist of Luther. I have spent much time in endeavouring to develop the true history of the origin of the sacramental controversy, not so much on account of the merits of the argumentation which took place in the course of it, as of the contrary representations of the ecclesiastical writers respecting the motives of these two early reformers. After much reflection I am convinced, that what is certain in this matter is in very little room." p. 772, 773.

We have quoted this latter paragraph for the consolation of the reader, who will feel much confidence in the relation which such a writer as Dr. Milner professes to have cost him much time, and whose interest it always is, that an unpleasant subject should be contained within narrow limits. A friend of

Carolstadt might object, that in the first paragraph of p. 791, Luther has made use of precisely the same argument against his opponent, which Celsus had long ago employed against the Christians in general.

The character and conduct of Erasmus form a prominent object in the period to which our attention is now particularly directed, and consequently in that volume of the *Church of Christ* at present before us. The influence of this great man upon the reformation is of a mixed, and, upon the whole, not of a favourable description. As far as his writings went to expose the ignorance and debaucheries of the monastic orders and other established institutions of the papacy, they directly concurred with the efforts of Luther and of all the sober reformers. But here, unfortunately, both for himself, and for the great cause then in agitation, his services stopped. With respect to any ulterior or more positive object, he was either neutral or hostile: and the character into which he finally subsided, after many irregular oscillations, was the latter. Whoever will give himself the trouble carefully to consult the large mass of letters writ a by this eminent scholar, and printed together in Le Clerc's handsome edition of his works, as far as they concern the reformation, will find reason to conclude, that, at first, his natural good sense and untainted piety led him to an almost perfect agreement with the substantial object of Luther and his associates. Yet even in the earlier stage of the affair his characteristic weakness and duplicity induced him to use different language on the same subject to different persons. As, however, the trying circumstances of the times obliged him to assume a more decided character, to which he was much averse, we observe him gradually and increasingly diverging from the evangelical interest, until, at no later a date than the year 1521, August

23, we find him so prevailed upon by the numerous suitors who urged an open warfare with Luther, as to tell Warham, archbishop of Canterbury at the time, that, in obedience to the earnest solicitations of the papists, he had taken the resolution of reading the writings of Luther for the purpose of writing against him. The consequence was the commencement of actual and public hostilities between him and the reformer; who, nevertheless, had submitted to all lawful and honourable concessions, in order to prevent them. These hostilities, however, on the side of Erasmus, real as they undoubtedly were, were conducted with an evident consciousness of his own weakness, both with respect to the cause for which he contended, and with respect to the person with whom he had to contend. On the side of Luther they were, generally speaking, respectful, honest, and vigorous; but as plainly involuntary.—But we begin to suspect ourselves of a degree of impertinence, in thus taking the pen out of the hand of Dr. Milner, who has professedly undertaken this very subject, and of whose ability in the execution there can be but one opinion with all competent judges. But before we personally introduce the historian, it may be proper to observe, that, although the present opinion of the aspect of Erasmus on the reformation, with those who have studied the times in question, be pretty generally that which has been expressed, it remained for Dr. Milner, not only to establish this opinion by a more luminous body of evidence than has ever appeared, to our knowledge, or in our own language, before; but likewise, by the same evidence, to depress the character of this extraordinary man much lower in the scale of moral integrity and worth, than, we believe, most persons, even of extensive reading on the subject, had conceived to be the fact. The picture which the pages before us have

drawn of the ingenious, the learned, the mild and social, and (could we confine our consideration to some of his productions), the pious Erasmus, is exceedingly mortifying; but the justice of it is too evident: it cannot be rejected without a violation of truth, although neither can it be admitted without a sigh. Every Christian, especially if he unite with that paramount title the inferior, but honourable, one of scholar, feels disposed to make a struggle for the reputation of Erasmus; and the sentiment costs him something, which, in this instance, prefers the friendship of truth to every other friendship.—But, without any farther delay, let us hear Dr. Milner speak.

“Every student of the history of the reformation finds both instruction and amusement in observing the conduct of Erasmus. On his merit, as a restorer of learning, though it is scarcely possible to express ourselves too strongly, we need say no more. His well-earned honours, in that respect, are beyond the reach either of calumny or envy. It is the purity of his Christian principles, and the integrity and conscientiousness of his motives, which are called in question. His writings against monks and friars are allowed to have been of considerable service in abating the attachment of mankind to popery; yet a most excellent judge (Seckendorf) has not scrupled to affirm, that, through an excessive desire to be applauded for politeness, elegance, and moderation, no man had injured the cause of Luther so much as Erasmus. In fact, Erasmus himself boasts of his services in this respect to the Romish cause, and intimates how ill he had been requited. The real character of this great man may be better known by a judicious selection of a few extracts from his own writings, than the numerous and contradictory accounts of his enemies and his advocates. Several passages, conducive to this purpose, will, I trust, be found in different parts of this history.

“The weak side of Erasmus was his disposition at all times to court the favour of persons of rank and distinction; and it was through their incessant importunities that he was at length prevailed on, though with much reluctance, to enter the lists against Luther. The papal advocates who had hitherto appeared in the controversy, had

done their own cause no good. The reformers were growing more bold and numerous every day. The ancient hierarchy was shaken to its foundations; and it was become sufficiently manifest, that neither ecclesiastical menaces, nor ecclesiastical punishments, could retard the progress of the new doctrines. The wisest and the most moderate of the Roman-catholics saw plainly that the church had lost much of its credit with the people in general, and that nothing could materially serve their cause, but what tended to regain the PUBLIC OPINION. For the purpose of compassing so important an end, they all, to a man, fixed their eyes on Erasmus. Not very anxious respecting his private sentiments in religion, they were fully convinced of his qualifications for the task they wished him to undertake. An extensive erudition, a perspicuous and elegant style, and especially an exquisite vein of sarcastic humour, marked this celebrated scholar as the proper champion to engage Luther. Accordingly, neither pains nor artifice were spared to secure his services. Princes, and prelates, and cardinals, and even the pope himself, were most assiduous in touching those strings, the vibrations of which they judged most likely to gratify his pride, stimulate his ambition, and awaken his natural timidity. King Henry VIII. &c.” pp. 845, 846.

The subdivisions of the next chapter (the seventh), of which the title is “Continuation of the Controversy with Erasmus,” contain further and very important information relative to that great man. These are “the Diatribe,” a work of Erasmus, on the freedom of the will, written in 1524, and in opposition to Luther: the observations of Dr. Milner on this book discover much acuteness:—“Luther’s Treatise de Servo Arbitrio,” a reply to the former work:—“Scriptural Arguments used in the Controversy:”—“Luther’s Arguments from St. Paul and St. John:”—“The Reply of Erasmus Hyperaspistes:”—“Scepticism of Erasmus:”—“Orthodoxy of Luther compared with the Scepticism of Erasmus:”—“Melancthon’s Judgment of the Controversy between Luther and Erasmus:”—“Hostility of Erasmus: his Apologies:”—“Inconsistency and Levity of Erasmus.” The

matter contained under these heads, especially some of the latter, is highly interesting, but, as far as Erasmus is concerned, very afflicting. Under the last is found the remarkable and well-known confession of weakness made by this eminent scholar to his friend Richard Pace:—"But if every syllable he (Luther) had written were unexceptionable, it was not my disposition to run the hazard of my life for the sake of truth. It is not every man who has sufficient courage to be a martyr; and I am afraid, that, in case of trial or persecution, I should follow Peter's example. I follow the decisions of the pope and the emperor when they are right, which is acting like a religious man; and when they are wrong I submit, which is taking the safe side \*," pp. 942, 943.

We must observe here, that there is some dissimilarity in the cases, as well as characters, of Erasmus and Peter; and we fear that the pliable scholar flattered himself with the supposed resemblance, even when performing the part of a humble confessor. The apostle had an ardent zeal for the cause of his Saviour; and he doubtless felt himself ready, as he professed, to lay down his life for his sake. He was confident likewise, however reprehensible that confidence were, that he should not fail in the hour of trial. His modern imitator, with certainly less ardour in the same cause, foresees his weakness and fall, should he be equally tried: but he reposes on the view, and deliberately, and *that* on the example of the

\* It may not be amiss to set down the original of this very curious passage. "Quod si omnia pie scripsisset, non tamen erit animus ob veritatem capite periclitari. Non omnes ad martyrium satis habent roboris; vereor autem, ne si quid inciderit tumultus, Petrum sim imitaturus. Pontificis ac Cæsaris bene decernentis sequor quod pium est, male statuentis fere quod tutum est." The reader will perhaps think with us, that this last sentence is not rendered with perfect accuracy above.

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chief of the apostles in his regard, justifies a future transgression.

The reflection of Dr. Milner on this subject is just and important.

"Here, at once, from his own mouth, is the solution of all the enigmatical conduct of Erasmus.—Many sincere and excellent Christians have, I believe, been as timid and irresolute as he was, but their timidity and irresolution was their pain and their burden. They prayed for grace to help in time of need; they never made light of their infirmities or besetting sins; but, on the contrary, viewed them as the enemies to their spiritual improvement, and struggled to obtain victory over them, constantly fighting like faithful soldiers of Christ, and diligently avoiding the snares of temptation." p. 943.

The following remark of our author, after having related some incidents, discovering the progress of the reformation, is highly important in itself, and well applied.

"I am persuaded no Christian reader will be fatigued with perusing such extracts as these, or think them ill placed in a history of the church of Christ. They introduce us into the very secret corners of the hearts of the Saxon divines, and prove, beyond contradiction, what was the real spirit of the reformation at this blessed season. Infidel or sceptical historians can easily invent motives and causes which discredit religion; it is more gratifying to the hostile tempers of such men, and also gives them abundantly less trouble, to indulge their imaginations in forming perverse and groundless conjectures, than to exercise a cool and dispassionate judgment in a laborious search after truth: there is, however, a pleasure in attaining a satisfactory conviction on a great and interesting subject, which is the inestimable reward of an honest and patient search after truth, and which is utterly unknown to the prejudiced writers of the stamp here alluded to, however brilliant may be their talents, however elegant their compositions." pp. 971, 972.

The observations which our historian makes on a certain letter of Erasmus well deserve to be transcribed.

"Thus does Erasmus, with the most consummate address, point out and praise a sort of middle path in religion, and at the same time, with a delicate adulation, insinuate, that his friend Henckell, to whom he was then writing, was among the few per-

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sons who were actually treading that path. The events, which followed, justify the historian in observing, that such systems of refinement and mediocrity are, in effect, perfect chimeras; that the cross of Christ must be undergone by those who mean to glorify God, to preserve a good conscience, to rebuke, by their lives and conversations, the evil practices of the world, and to promote the salvation of mankind. Erasmus, during many years, was employed in this nugatory scheme; and while he courted the favour of the great, and secured himself from the danger of persecution, he promoted not one of those peculiar truths of Christian doctrine, on account of which the good reformers suffered grievously from the tyranny of powerful princes and prelates." pp. 1060, 1061.


The proof contained in pp. 1095—1102, of the tolerating principles of Luther, with respect to penal inflictions for the sake of religion, together with the observations upon it, will be read with some surprise, and more admiration.

No circumstance in the life of Luther places his character in a more unfavourable light than the Sacramentarian controversy, particularly as it was conducted between him and the Swiss divines, men of equal zeal for the reformation, of more discernment respecting the subject in dispute, and of a temper, both in the conduct of the controversy, and in the state of irreconcilable doctrinal hostility in which it left them, far more pacific, and therefore more Christian. The faults of Luther in this affair are freely admitted, and censured, by Dr. Milner. For the purpose of healing these dissensions, a conference was proposed by the Landgrave of Hesse, and held at Marpurg, in the year 1529. It ended, says our author, rather according to what might have been expected, than according to the Christian wishes of the good Landgrave. We are bound, he adds, to mark with the most entire disapprobation, that unchristian stubbornness of temper which manifested itself in Luther at the conclusion of the conferences. The sacramentarians begged hard to be acknowledged as brethren. Considerable concessions were made. And the

Landgrave exerted himself to produce a cordial friendship. But the spirit of Luther proved perfectly untractable and intolerant. Nothing more could be gained from him, than that each side should shew Christian charity to the other, as far as they could conscientiously; &c. pp. 1119, 1120.

The Helvetic reformers were much irritated by the conduct of Luther. Bullinger, one of the most eminent of the number, some years afterwards (1534) writes to Myconius:—"Domini Lutheri impudentia nuper libellis quibusdam de *primatu, missa*, et in Erasmus scriptis vehementer doleo. Video enim hunc hominem ecclesiæ Dei plus incommodaturum quam profuit unquam. Interim vero hunc omnibus in Europa doctis in evangelio præferre non cessat Bucerus, miror quo consilio? *Æcolampadium* virum sanctissimum illum, prædecessorem tuum in istis furiosis rixis palam prædicat a Satana strangulatum periisse. Vide quid Monachus iste audeat? Erasmus prorsus Arrianis annumerat, et convitiis atque calumniarum plastra in senem illum, et de ecclesia et litteris optime meritum effundit." On the same subject, Myconius, in his reply, says: "De Erasmo et Lutero idem sentio quod tu de altero. Profuerunt initio, nunc nemo nocet perniciosius. Alter superbus et insolens est, alter avarus et ambitiosus. Deus opto faveat, imo emendet utrosque.—Equidem jurare ausim, Lutherum persuasum, Spiritum Sanctum non esse nisi apud se et suos." It is pleasing, however, to remark the great variation of style with which the former of these divines speaks of Luther, immediately upon the intelligence of his death, when that event had given him, in his own view, greater liberty of renewing his literary intercourse with the principal friend of the deceased reformer, Melancthon, to whom he writes: "D. Lutherum virum doctum, et de ecclesia optime meritum, gaudeo migrasse ad Dominum, non propter causam, quam cum illo habuimus litigandam: Dominus novit:

sed quod malis liberatus maximis futurisque ereptus calamitatibus, cursum suum feliciter absolvit, et nunc cum Domino nostro, cui servivit lætatur in gloria. Interim non mediocriter doleo, illo nos viro destitutos, cujus ope et consilio in communi religionis causa poteramus juvari. Tametsi enim pro carnis humanæ ingenio sua habuerit vitia, insigne tamen constantiæ donum consecutus, fortis et tenax fuit in retinenda sinceritate doctrinæ contra papistas, quibus nihil concedi voluit per compositiones et colloquia. Vidit haud dubie," &c.\*

After what we have written, we trust we shall not be accused of any hostile intention, or of a spirit peculiarly hypercritical, if we state the few circumstances in this history which we could have wished absent. The expression "seeking souls," which, if we mistake not, occurs more than once, might, we think, have been exchanged for one equally significant, and less calculated to excite *unnecessary* prejudice. The being *pitched against* another in a contest, being an *overmatch*, and being *gravelled*, appeared to us terms beneath the dignity of such a history as the present. We are not quite reconciled to the use of capitals by way of imparting emphasis to a word or sentence: and we were almost shocked at the appearance of a  occasionally adorning the margin for somewhat of the same purpose. Throughout all the latter part of the history,

\* See Fueslin. Cent. prim. Epist. ab Eccles. Helvet. Reform. &c. Num. xxxvii. xxxviii. and lxi. Num. iii. is a letter of Erasmus, not published in the Amsterdam edition of his Works, to Zuingle, dated 1523, where he says, "Omnia recusavi, quæ mihi hoc nomine offerebantur, ut adversus illum (Lutherum) scriberem;" and yet in 1521 he had, as he professes in his letter to Warham, begun to read Luther's Works for the purpose of answering them. Perhaps the design had been relinquished. Or he might mean, as the following words seem to import, that he had not yet actually commenced hostilities: which was the fact.

Maclaine's name is misspelt Mac-lane. We must confess likewise, that we have seemed to feel that a greater attention might have been paid to chronology and dates. Dr. Milner is aware of the importance of accuracy in this respect, as appears from an observation, p. 844: but authors cannot place themselves in the exact position and circumstances of readers.

We are here reminded, that Luther wrote a letter to Erasmus, in the year 1524, which is referred to p. 855, and quoted at length in the Appendix, pp. 25, &c. This is the same letter, which in the last edition of Erasmus's Works is numbered 726. Dr. Milner, p. 927, represents the letter of Erasmus to Luther, numbered 806, as the answer to that of Luther just alluded to: but it must be another, and a later one, not contained in the collection of Erasmus's letters. The substance and spirit of the letter will hardly comport with such an one as that of Luther. Erasmus plainly supposes himself to have been called by Luther an atheist, an epicurean, &c.; and the terms in which the date is expressed put the matter beyond a doubt:—Basilea II. Aprilis, quo tuæ redditæ sunt literæ, Anno 1526.

The importance of this portion of Dr. Milner's history is impressed upon the intelligent and considerate reader, if he be a Christian, by many considerations. The attention of general readers has of late, more than usual, been called to the reformation and to the character of the agents concerned in that astonishing revolution. Unfortunately for truth and piety, the subject has been pretty much confined to the hands, either of decided infidels, or of cold and merely speculative Christians. The consequence has been, an almost entire misapprehension and misrepresentation of the subject with the writers; and with the readers, as far as they have trusted their guides, a proportionable degree of delusion. It is a delusion,

likewise, be it observed, of a very pernicious tendency, as discrediting, and, so far, impeding the progress of religion in the souls of men. The Christian world, therefore, is under great obligation to an author, who, like the present, on the one hand possesses the real Christianity to enter into the true character of the reformers, and the merits of their cause; and, on the other, is endowed with the learning, judgment, and perseverance necessary to collect and arrange the voluminous materials which are extant on the subject; and thus restore the characters of those to whom protestants owe their present invaluable religious advantages, to the honourable estimation in which they ought to be held, and recover for them the influence which their heroic and triumphant faith is calculated to have, both in the revival and establishment of the same faith, upon posterity. It is no small recommendation of the present work, that it has brought together, and presented to the mere English reader, the most valuable portions of those numerous protestant collections, which, notwithstanding their worth, are exceedingly difficult of access in England, and, as long as Europe continues in its present agitated state, will remain so.

The principal impression, we apprehend, which will abide on the mind of the reader of this work will be, the new and different light in which the characters of the two heroes of their age, Luther and Erasmus, are placed. Luther, however, is properly speaking, and justly, the hero of this volume. Yet great as Dr. Milner's admiration of this reformer evidently is, he has conducted his narration, we think, with exemplary candour. The faults of Luther, perhaps all his faults, are allowed, and chastised with the due degree of censure. At times, as we proceeded, we did indeed think, that the author was disposed to favour. But on due consideration we willingly surrender the suspicion. The writer of a piece of biography, or of a

history in which some particular character predominates, has formed his opinion of the individual from a careful study, and repeated inspection, of his life, as a whole; and he comes to the consideration of the successive parts of that life, when he records them, with information and a judgment necessarily, in some degree, different from those of the reader, who, as he advances in the story, is acquainted but slightly, if at all, with the whole portion which is future, and which could not fail, if known, to cast some shade or colour upon what precedes. A second reading puts him pretty nearly in the attitude and condition of the author. Dr. Milner has certainly been very successful in vindicating some parts of the character of Luther, which have been thought not calculated to bear much light, even by his friends. He has demonstrably shewn, that the reformer, however zealous, and at times paradoxical, understood how to guard and qualify the doctrines most liable to abuse, as well as those who make this their principal study. There are likewise instances of submission, conciliation, and candour in the conduct of the Saxon reformer, which, as being of a class different from his characteristic virtues, discover more decisively the operation and power of divine grace in the formation of his character.

The account of Erasmus is distinguished by corrections of a different kind. The influence of worldly affections, excited by worldly temptations, in producing an indecision and duplicity of views and conduct, and, when those were no longer tenable, an evident hostility to truth itself, is sadly exemplified in the facts which the diligence and penetration of the present historian have presented to the reader. The instruction conveyed by this least grateful part of the history is very striking and important; and it is, in a particular and solemn manner, directed to those, whose talents and influence expose them to flattery, and who are therefore likely to be

so circumstanced, as not to be able to retain the praise of men, without forfeiting that of God.

Upon the whole, we rejoice much in the appearance of this volume, and hope and pray, that the author may have health and ability to bring forward the rest in succession, as long as the Christian church will supply him with such materials. We have no doubt that the work will do great good, not only in correcting popular mistakes, but in nourishing the souls of the true servants of Christ, and impressing upon them more deeply the value of those truths for which the reformers so earnestly and successfully contended. The cardinal doctrine of the reformation, and particularly of the first reformer, was justification by faith in Christ alone. We are informed, by Fra Paolo, that when the delegates of the Council of Trent came to this doctrine, they were thrown into some embarrassment, because the doctors of the Romish church had supplied them with no decision upon it. Can any thing expose the deplorable state of this church, and the urgent necessity of a reformation, more powerfully than this circumstance? Had it never occurred, as a question worth settling, to the leaders of the holy universal church, for many centuries, in what light man stands before God; whether he be accepted or condemned; if condemned, whether there be any means of deliverance from condemnation; what is the relation in which Christ stands to man in this respect; and whether, if to be restored to the favour of God at all, he is to be restored by himself or by a more powerful agent? Did the whole argument of the Epistle to the Romans appear to them unworthy of being expressed in a single article? Let Christians, let protestants, especially British ones, instead of dwelling upon the failings of the reformers, with a misplaced and ungenerous particularity, direct their attention to the great and substantial blessings bequeathed to them by

the life, doctrine, and blood of these holy confessors. Let them labour to imitate, if they choose, exceed them, not only in contending for doctrines, but in practising duties; fight the good fight of faith, as they did; and be faithful unto death. This is the proper, the best fruit of their example; and it is likewise the proper and best improvement of the volume, which we now dismiss, with our most cordial recommendation, and sincerest good wishes.

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*Practical Sermons.* By ABRAHAM REES, D.D. F.R.S., Editor of the *New Cyclopædia*. In 2 Volumes. London: Longman. 1809. Price 1*l.* 1*s.*

DR. REES, who is well known as the learned editor of the *New English Cyclopædia*, has enabled the public, by the means of these Sermons, which were delivered by him before a congregation of protestant dissenters in the course of his ordinary ministry, to form a very fair estimate of his character as a theologian and a preacher. We conceive him to be a minister of the unitarian class; but in these discourses we perceive little that is controversial. His tenets, nevertheless, are by no means concealed. They unquestionably differ widely from those of our church: and yet they often seem to border on orthodoxy. Judging from these sermons, there is an evident mildness in his character, a disposition to tolerate those who differ from him, and a love of moderation. But though in point of doctrinal orthodoxy, strictly so called, the deviation may often appear to be small, we shall find some important passages, at once doctrinal and practical in their nature, on which, however we may wish to emulate the candour shewn by this writer, we shall deem it necessary to animadvert with freedom.

We shall begin with bestowing the ready tribute of our praise on some of the qualities of the several discourses now before us. They

are characterized by simplicity and good taste. Nothing can be more natural and easy than their style. It is at once modest and unambitious, neat and perspicuous, rational and manly; and, for the most part, critically correct. In short, if style and manner formed the intrinsic merit of sermons, we should be disposed to rate those of Dr. Rees very highly. The preacher is never declamatory, seldom authoritative:—indeed, we doubt whether it is the custom of ministers of this class sufficiently to magnify their office. He addresses himself to the understanding of his hearers, whom he every where assumes to be of a reflecting class; and seems uniformly bent on securing their sober judgment on his side, before he proceeds to make his appeal either to their conscience or their heart. His own premises sometimes entitle him to come to a stronger conclusion than that to which he advances, and to press a practical inference farther than he thinks fit to urge it. The common error, both of preachers and orators, is of a contrary kind. The principal fault in the style of these sermons, we think, is that of occasional tameness. It is, however, the tameness of a prudent, sensible man, who seems convinced himself of all that he asserts, and hoping to gain others by the modesty and reasonableness of his claims upon them: and though he does not attempt to soar with any adventurous wing, or

“from heights sublime  
To flash down eloquence;”

yet we meet with some glowing passages, and with many which fascinate by their simple oratory. Moreover, though as a divine he is much more rational than spiritual, and rather more practical than devout; and is very far from transporting us into the third heavens; he occasionally will be found to gratify the evangelic ear:

“Some chord, in unison with what we hear,  
Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.”

The misfortune is, that when the grateful sound is beginning to vibrate in our ears, it is checked by the too sudden intrusion of other notes: the thread of the general argument must be resumed: the other branch of the subject must be discussed: the preacher seems himself not to be aware of the religious feeling which he has awakened: and we are compelled, on a review of the whole matter, to pronounce, that (if the epithet *evangelical* can with propriety be applied to him at all) he is *evangelical* chiefly in his admissions, and in some of his brief incidental observations; *evangelical* in his quotation of some texts which lie across his way; *evangelical* in his more loose and general phraseology: *evangelical* perhaps in consequence of a partial adherence to the doctrines of those honoured predecessors in his pulpit whom he mentions in an address printed at the close of the present work; but far from *evangelical* in his own taste and spirit, or in the fundamental principle of his discourses.

But it is time to make some quotations in illustration of these several remarks.

We were favourably impressed by the observation in the “Advertisement,” that the Author of these Sermons, who “had been encouraged in those departments of literature and science to which many years of his life had been devoted,” had nevertheless “always considered his primary and most important duties” to be those of his profession.

The first Sermon, on “The Accomplishment of Prophecy in the Introduction and Progress of Christianity,” is a very proper commencement of these volumes. From the text—“A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time”—he introduces an excellent argument in favour of the truth of Christianity, deduced from its remarkable success in spite of the most unpromising means, and from the pro-

phet's intimation, seven or eight hundred years before, that this disproportion between the means and end should subsist.

"A little one," says the prophet, "shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Whilst he is professedly describing a very extraordinary revolution that was to take place in the state of the world at a future period, he speaks, in the most degrading and discouraging terms, of the number and abilities, of the rank and influence, of the persons by whom it was to be effected. He seems, therefore, to be uniting contradictions; signal success with the most feeble instruments; the most important end with the most ineffectual means; the conversion of the world with talents and powers unequal to its accomplishment. Nothing could be more improbable than that a cause which commenced so unfavourably should terminate so gloriously; and unless that Being, by the counsels of whose wisdom, and the operations of whose power, the event was secured, had communicated the discovery, it never could have been suggested by the natural sagacity of the prophet. He never would have thought of connecting so astonishing a change in the religious sentiments and practice of mankind, as that which Christianity produced, with means that appeared to human view so inadequate to the effect. But the fact verified the prediction; and, therefore, the prediction itself proceeded from the supernatural inspiration of God. The Almighty Sovereign of nature, who had planned the scheme, and who conducted it to its completion, revealed it to the prophet, and by him to the existing generation, many ages before the period of its accomplishment; and notwithstanding every seeming improbability of the event, it was the object of hope through successive generations and in various nations of the earth, till the prophecy was actually fulfilled." pp. 4, 5.

"To Rome rather than to Judea; to the conquerors of the world rather than to the oppressed and tributary inhabitants of a vanquished and despised province; to those who, like the Romans and the Athenians, were indulging and encouraging a spirit of inquiry and improvement, rather than to the Jews, who were averse from every innovation in their religious creed and forms of worship; it was most natural to look for persons capable of contriving and executing any great design in favour of knowledge and religion. Nevertheless, in Judea, a country of very small extent, subjugated by the victorious arms of Rome, and degraded by its dependent, tributary state, did that plan of

instructing and reforming the world originate, which by degrees extended its influence to neighbouring nations, and gained converts and votaries amongst those who had been accustomed to treat the inhabitants of the territory from which it sprung with contempt and insult. In Bethlehem, and not in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, was that divine Teacher and Saviour born; and in Nazareth, proverbially mean and despicable, did He spend the earlier period of his life, who was destined, by the wisdom of Providence, to establish a kingdom of truth and righteousness, which was to become universal and perpetual." pp. 6, 7.

We think that the author erects into a far too distinct and respectable class, those believers who, in the earliest ages, "had not resolution to make an open profession" of the Gospel of Christ, "though they were secretly devoted to him and to his cause." "This class," he says, "comprehends Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Gamaliel, and several more, who were probably believers, but dreaded the consequence of testifying their faith by enlisting visibly under his banner." Some real believers undoubtedly there might be, who, in the commencement of their career, and especially before the ascension of Christ and the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, were in bondage to the fear of man; but the general character of the true disciples was very different; and the common doctrine of Scripture was, "If thou wilt *confess* with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:" "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in the glory of his Father and his holy angels."

We heartily wish that the following excellent conclusion of this first of Dr. Rees's "*Practical Sermons*" may lead to the *practical end* of encouraging missions among the heathen, as well as the more general dissemination of the Scriptures.—

"Christianity has already triumphed over many enemies. It will still subsist and tri-

umph, notwithstanding the indifference of some and the active opposition of others. *It should be our ambition to contribute to its subsistence and triumph, and to be fellow-workers with God in maintaining and promoting it.* Our consolation and hope are nearly connected with the truth and duration of our holy religion: and if we transmit to future generations what is the inestimable source of our own encouragement and joy amidst the weaknesses of nature and the vicissitudes of the world, we shall convey to them the richest inheritance which we can give or they receive.

"We see at present but a part of the triumph to which Christianity shall attain. Its progress towards perfection, though more slow and gradual than it once was, is no less certain. It is vain to expect any distinguished amelioration and improvement in the state of the world, till its principles are better understood, its genuine spirit more generally imbibed, and the practice inculcated by it more ostensibly prevalent. We have no reason to dread the ultimate issue, however we may be discouraged by present appearances. The language of prophecy and the evidence of past facts concur in assuring us, that our holy religion is the care of heaven; that an almighty Providence is its guardian in every changing scene; and that it will finally prevail and triumph. No weapon that is formed against it; no combination of efforts for undermining and abolishing it, can prosper. Its adversaries would do well to consider, that it is equally fruitless and culpable and ignominious to be found contending against God. His counsel shall stand. His purpose shall be accomplished. To resist and to counteract his declared will are as unavailable as they are criminal and disgraceful. But whatever may be the number or the rank of those who believe and profess Christianity in any present period or state of the world; of this we are assured, that those who will finally share its benefits will form a 'great multitude of all nations and kindred and people and tongues.' In this countless multitude of glorified and happy beings may we be distinguished and honoured! May we share and celebrate the triumphs of our divine Saviour, when he shall come arrayed in glorious majesty to 'be admired of all who believe,' and to complete the purposes of his mission and undertaking by rendering their felicity perfect and eternal! Amen." pp. 21—23.

The second Sermon, entitled "The Observance of the Sabbath a perpetual Memorial of the Truth of

Christianity," is good as far as it goes; but is defective, inasmuch as it forbears to intimate, in the slightest degree, in what manner that portion of the day should be spent which is not occupied in public worship. It is, doubtless, important to shew, that "we ought not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is:" but is it not of almost equal moment to discourage that complete secularisation of the remaining part of this holy day, to which some very regular church-goers are prone? We do not wish to recommend either a Jewish or a Puritanical Sabbath. We conceive that Protestantism, and especially the Protestantism of the Church of England, lies in this, as well as many other respects, between the two extremes of the Papists, and of the rigid followers of John Knox. The present danger, however, is on the side of laxity.

"O Italy! thy Sabbaths will be soon  
Our Sabbaths!"

But the subject, it may be said, did not necessarily belong to the present text. We should have been satisfied with this answer, if we had found the deficiency supplied in any other part of these volumes. To say the truth, we suspect that the disciples of Dr. Rees, no less than many of the adherents to our own church, stand in much need of admonition upon the point in question; as well, indeed, as on the important matter of family devotion, once so characteristic of the dissenters, and now so commonly neglected. We have not remarked any passage in these discourses which adverts specifically to this topic.

In the third Sermon, on "The Object and Nature of Christian Worship," the author, as we might naturally expect, exposes some of his own peculiar principles. "The First Cause," he says, "of all existence, himself underived, must be *one Being*. Variety and multiplicity of co-equal and co-existent beings, each of them infinite and eternal, are altogether incomprehensible

and incredible." We need not enter here into a full reply to observations which have so often been answered before: we shall only remark, that such a creature as man, when speaking of the Being who created him, though he may very properly use the term incomprehensible, should be cautious how he subjoins the word incredible. Certainly that which is incomprehensible is not therefore also incredible. The question is, what God himself has revealed on the subject. We wish not too strenuously to contend for the adoption of any human phraseology; but the Doctor, we are sorry to say, is disposed to abstain from the use of many Scriptural expressions, both on this and other points of doctrinal divinity. The sermon before us is, in some respects, good; though we could have wished to see some passages wholly omitted, and others greatly qualified, and the Saviour of the world also much more distinctly exhibited. Writers of this class are in general extremely earnest to shew that the understanding has a large province in religion: we find Dr. Rees, however, in the following passage, departing from the coldness of his system, and urging that "the spiritual worshipper will also exercise the affections of the heart."

"He will love and fear God: he will be grateful in the remembrance of past benefits: he will confide in divine Providence for future good: he will cherish a humble, contented, and resigned temper in all the circumstances and amidst all the vicissitudes of life: and he will cultivate that benevolence of disposition, which shall induce him, like the object of his worship, to be kind and compassionate to all about him.

"Moreover, those sentiments of the understanding and those affections of the heart, which we have now suggested, will produce corresponding effects on the outward conduct. He that worships God *in spirit*, though he does not neglect the outward forms and expressions of devotion, does not content himself with these; his mind ascends to God, when he has no opportunity for bending the knee or clothing his thoughts in words. He mingles pious meditations and devout ejaculations with the occupations and even with the pleasures of life. In so-

cial intercourse as well as in private retirement; in the public scene, as well as in the sequestered and solitary retreat, he communes with God, supplicates his favour, and commits himself to his care and blessing. Nay, the course of his habitual conduct, under the restraint and influence of religious principles, is devoted to God. It is directed and regulated by the fear of offending him. It is guided and animated by the hope of his favour. Submission to his authority, obedience to his laws, imitation of his moral excellencies, resignation to his will, and a solicitude to promote his honour by the increasing influence of piety and virtue, are expressions of the homage which the spiritual worshipper renders unto God; and they are no less acceptable than that worship, which is accompanied with the outward forms, and which dictates itself in the explicit language, of devotion. Every act of piety, every exercise of virtue, every effort of benevolence, originating in just views of God, and animated by suitable affections, are, in reality, the fruits and evidences of those sentiments and dispositions, which constitute the essence, secure the benefits, and produce the effects of that spiritual worship which our Saviour recommends. By such fruits and evidences of genuine devotion the spiritual worshipper will be known and distinguished amongst the multitude of those, who content themselves with the form of godliness without its power." p. 53—55.

The two next sermons are on the "Resurrection of Christ;" and in the former of them the subject is very ably treated. The latter of them is on the "practical Influence" of the doctrine; and the text is, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." The preacher infers, first, that our Lord's resurrection affords unquestionable evidence that his authority is divine and his doctrine true: and assuming that we regulate our temper and practice accordingly, he observes, that, "because he lives, we shall live also." We were pleased to find, that under his second head he remarks, though much more briefly than we could have wished, that

"Our Lord's restoration to life assures his faithful followers of all needful assistance and support, in every duty and in every trial: and in this important sense it is true,

that 'because he lives they shall live also; that is,' says he, "they shall be directed and enabled to cultivate those virtues and graces, in the exercise of which the true dignity and happiness of life consist."

"To such a life," he adds, "though it be the proper life of man, most reasonable and honourable, most useful and happy, animal nature and the ordinary course of the world will raise a formidable opposition; an opposition which none, in the most advanced stage of this life, can altogether escape, and which none, in any stage of it, can easily overcome. Thus exposed, however exemplary our own vigilance, resolution, and zeal, we shall need the protection and succour of a power, mightier than our own. It will be no inconsiderable encouragement to our own fortitude and activity to reflect, that the sovereign of nature is our friend and helper; and we shall engage in the warfare with vigour and success, while God preserves and aids us."

"From the resurrection of Christ we derive the most animating hopes of divine patronage and assistance. He has thus assured us of the truth of those promises on which our expectations are founded; and he has thus evinced his power of imparting the succour which we need and seek. As the whole history of his life and labours, uniformly devoted to our welfare, forbids our entertaining a suspicion of his inclination, his resurrection and consequent dominion banish every doubt of his ability, to defend and support us in seasons of the greatest trial and danger. Our virtue and happiness are entrusted to his care; the preservation and advancement of them form part of the joy that was set before him, and of the recompence conferred upon him for his services and sufferings on our behalf; and we may hence infer that he will never leave us unprotected and unsupported. As it was the great end of his undertaking to conduct us by a course of holy obedience to immortality and glory, we may rely on his faithfulness and goodness: he will not withhold those supplies of wisdom and strength which our proneness to err and the power of temptation may require." p. 105—107.

While we were gratified by perceiving in this place so distinct an acknowledgement of the doctrine of "divine succour," as Dr. Rees also elsewhere terms it, we thought that the occasion called for a much more specific statement of the nature of our Saviour's office in this respect. When he left the world, he assured his sorrowing disciples that the loss of his bodily pre-

sence should be more than compensated by his sending to them that "Comforter, whom the world could not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him;" and who should "lead them into all truth." Doubtless it was in this sense that he said to his followers, "Behold, I am with you always even to the end of the world." Doubtless, also, in the same sense it had before been declared by the prophet, "that when he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, he received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious also; that the Lord God might dwell among them." "He is exalted," said the Apostle, "to give repentance unto Israel"—that is, to all his believing people—"and remission of sins." The out-pouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is affirmed in the New Testament to have been in fulfilment of the ancient promises; and the new dispensation is emphatically called "the dispensation of the Spirit," because under it the supply of the Spirit of Christ would be abundantly given. "For the promise"—that is, the promise of the Holy Spirit—"is unto you, and to your children, and unto all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." "Except," says our Saviour to the inquiring Jew, "a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" he cannot be a member of my spiritual kingdom. Passages like these, when brought together, appear to us to give a shape and consistency to the doctrine in question, and to exalt it into far higher rank among the truths of our religion than it is allowed by even the least heterodox of the unitarians to possess.

It is observed, thirdly, that our Lord's victory over death affords a pledge of the ultimate triumph of virtue and piety; and, fourthly, that by his restoration to life the fears inseparable from a frail, imperfect virtue and piety, are removed, and sincerity is encouraged to expect acceptance.

"Christ," he argues, "died for our offences and rose again for our justification. His death was a sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of men. Under the government of a holy and righteous Being, jealous of the honour of his law, and invariably disposed to testify his abhorrence of sin by some awful token of his displeasure against it, even while he cancelled the guilt of the transgressor, the death of Christ was the appointed condition of conferring pardon on the penitent: it was a solemn ratification, on the part of God, of the promise and grant of everlasting life and blessedness, on the terms of a sincere, though mixed and imperfect obedience. The resurrection of Christ was a visible testimony, that his death was available to the benevolent purpose, for which it was ordained; and that the Supreme Sovereign, who, for wise ends in his administration, appointed this method of dispensing pardon and happiness to the penitent and upright, approved and confirmed it.

"This event, then, by dissipating the fears and encouraging the hopes of persons, conscious of their demerit and imperfection, affords a very powerful inducement to activity and zeal in well doing. So far from having a tendency to relax the resolution of upright and ingenuous minds; to render them careless and slothful; and to make them contented with partial and low attainments in virtue and piety; the assurance, derived from the death and subsequent resurrection of Christ, that God is not strict to mark the iniquity of the penitent, and that he will accept the sincere, notwithstanding their infirmities and failings, is an incentive to emulation, diligence, and constancy, in the practice and profession of religion, which none but obdurate transgressors can resist." pp. 109, 110.

The latter part of the passage which we have last quoted is extremely good, and serves to vindicate those views of the practical influence of the doctrine of the atonement, which are generally maintained by orthodox divines.

The two following Sermons are on the very important subject of Faith. The author shews that we act by faith—that is, by our belief in things not actually submitted to our senses—in most of the concerns of this life, and justly infers the reasonableness of the use of it in religion. He remarks, also, that "Christian faith is an act of the

will, as well as of the understanding;" and that it depends on the state of the affections and passions, as well as upon the judgment; and may be obstructed or promoted by a variety of circumstances besides the simple evidence of truth." Whilst one person, he says, may be incredulous, because he indulges prejudices, &c.; another person will find ample, clear, convincing evidence, which was objectionable, unsatisfactory, and inconclusive, to the other. Conceit, and an affectation of superior wisdom; self-sufficiency, and a desire of differing from the multitude; obstinacy in error, or addictedness to licentious conduct; may bar up the avenues to the light of truth. Christian faith, he also says, is of a practical nature. "Those," he observes, "who admit the truth of the discoveries of revelation, with regard to the providence of God, the mediation of the Redeemer, the pardon of sin, the grant of divine assistance, and a state of future immortality; are furnished with principles of conduct and of consolation which the light of unassisted reason could never have afforded them."

Much as we approve the passages we have quoted—passages which, if taken by themselves, seem to exempt Dr. Rees from some of the charges commonly brought against persons inclining to his doctrinal opinions—we nevertheless consider his discourses on Faith as radically deficient in two most important particulars. First, he no where represents faith as the gift of God: it is described as if it were the act of the unassisted will and affections. The preacher here, as in many other places, so entirely omits the mention of that "divine succour" of which we represented him as much too briefly treating in a former sermon, that his hearers will be likely to forget that it is the office of the divine Spirit to produce this grace in us. The Scriptures speak of faith as the operation of God; "Unto you," says the apostle, "is

it *given* to believe:" and the language which we are continually taught by inspiration to employ is, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." We at the same time perfectly agree with Dr. Rees, that nothing can be more rational than faith: it is conformable, that is to say, to right reason; though the reason of man, on account of its being clouded by prejudice and sin, is prone, either in whole or in part, to resist the truth; and needs therefore, like all his other powers, to be baptized with the baptism of the Spirit.

The other omission is scarcely of less moment. Our author speaks of faith generally; meaning, for the most part, faith in the being and attributes of God, and in the divine mission of our Saviour. Faith, however, when treated of in the New Testament, is very frequently and emphatically applied to the death and sufferings of Christ, and to his propitiation for sin: and it is even described as standing opposed to works, so far as respects our justification; "For by grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast:"... "therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace." We are said to "have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand;" and, "being justified by faith," to "have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:" and, to quote a still stronger passage, it is affirmed; "Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Surely, therefore, faith "in the blood of Christ," faith "in him who died for our sins and rose again for our justification"—which faith, it is expressly said, "is imputed to us for righteousness"—ought always to make a leading part of that general definition of Christian faith which is given by an ambassador of Christ, a minister of reconciliation under the gracious dispensation of the

Gospel. Our church has admirably provided, by her Articles and Homilies, as well indeed as by her general service, for the assertion of this important principle.

The next Sermon, on the "Christian Hope," partakes of the fault which is most common in these volumes: it makes man to appear too much as the author of his own salvation, while it is far from sufficiently celebrating the riches of the divine mercy. It speaks, indeed, of the blessedness of the Christian hope; and we must acknowledge that the heart of the author, especially in his 158th page, appears to be warmed with his subject: but why do we not find among the reasons for denominating this hope blessed, some clearer mention of that grace which is the foundation of it, and which is spoken of by the apostle in the following manner a few verses after the text: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived," &c.: "but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being *justified by his grace*, we might be made heirs according to the *hope* of eternal life."

Dr. Rees is a man of so much ability, he has such command of language, and places in so striking a point of view some of the doctrines with which he is chiefly conversant, that his readers are in danger of being seduced into too favourable an opinion of his creed, by the effect which in such hands even a very imperfect theology produces. We are anxious to guard them against certain writers of talents on this account. We will illustrate our remark by adverting to a passage in the work of Dr. A. Smith on the Theory of Moral Sentiments. He

there describes, with much ability, the case of a great man pursued by a guilty conscience, and gives a most striking view of the horrors of his mind, without taking to his aid that source of terror to the wicked which is derived from religious considerations. He represents the unhappy object as "sensible that the honour of his exalted station is become defiled by the baseness of the means through which he rose to it; as invoking in vain the dark and dismal powers of forgetfulness and oblivion; as remembering, nevertheless, what he has done, and inferring that other people likewise must remember it." "Amidst all the gaudy pomp," says he, "of the most ostentatious greatness; amidst the venal and vile adulation of the great and learned; amidst the more innocent, though more foolish, acclamations of the common people; amidst all the pride of conquest, and the triumph of successful war, he is still secretly pursued by the avenging furies of shame and remorse: and while glory seems to surround him on all sides, he himself, in his own imagination, sees black and foul infamy fast pursuing him, and every moment ready to overtake him from behind."

How many persons are there, who, in reading this terrific description, would deem nothing wanting to complete the picture? And yet, surely the idea of an avenging Deity, and of a state of eternal retribution, would have added unspeakably to the horror of the description.

"Oh my offence is rank!—it smells to Heaven!"

Many will rise from the perusal of this passage in the work of Dr. Smith, with little consciousness of any defect in it; because his very superior talents have enabled him thus strikingly to illustrate his own imperfect doctrine respecting conscience, without calling to his aid any idea of a God or an hereafter. We would apply the remark, though in

a measured way, to the sermon of Dr. Rees now under consideration. He pleases our ear with his description of the Christian hope, and introduces a variety of just and striking sentiments on the subject; but, as we have already noticed, one essential circumstance, which contributes to the "blessedness" of it, is nearly omitted. How might this writer have improved his discourse, if, in tracing the source of this hope, and in treating of the triumphant as well as grateful feeling which it is so well calculated to inspire, he had held up conspicuously to view the astonishing magnitude of the divine grace in our redemption; if he had reminded us, that it is a hope vouchsafed to those who might otherwise have been in despair;—a hope which a Mary Magdalen was invited to enjoy, and which a thief on the cross was encouraged to entertain;—and if he had thus endeavoured to attune all our hearts to that universal song of the redeemed; "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The following discourse, on "mutual Love," is among the best in the two volumes. We cannot, indeed, agree with our author in "indulging the pleasing expectation that Christianity, when unendowed, will justify the renewal of that expression of the first disciples, "Behold how these Christians love one another!" but we can cordially unite in almost every other sentiment of the sermon. The author rises above his ordinary level in the following passage.

"His doctrine likewise, deriving energy

from his example, inculcates the same lesson. Does he not teach us, that we are all children of the same parent; alike sinful and guilty; and by the grace of his gospel and the efficacy of his mediation, alike recovered to the hope of pardon and assistance; and equally candidates for future felicity and glory? Thus allied to one another by our derivation from God; by the common participation of the bounties of his providence and the blessings of his grace; by the circumstances of guilt and weakness in which he found us and in which he was manifested for our relief and rescue; by the possession of similar privileges under the dispensation which he has established; and by the same animating hopes with which he has inspired us:—Thus allied to one another, nothing need be said to evince the obligation of mutual love." pp. 182, 183.

"The excellence," he afterwards observes, "of this distinction of Christian faith and practice will farther appear, if we consider, that it is a distinction which is durable as eternity. When all our present discriminating appellations and outward forms of profession shall cease, and we compose a part of a great multitude of glorified and happy beings which no man can number; when our faith shall be transformed into sight and hope be accomplished in fruition; our love to one another will remain, and acquire a refinement and energy, which will render it a source of consummate and never-ending felicity. Love is the very element of heaven. It is the vital principle of celestial spirits. From the uninterrupted and increasing exercise of it we shall derive permanent and increasing felicity through eternal ages." p. 190.

"Finally," he says in conclusion, "Let us aspire to the region of perfect peace and love. Discord and tumult rend the church and distract the world. From scenes of devastating conquest, carnage, and blood, let us direct our views to the tranquil asylum prepared for the upright and holy; to that unmolested and eternal rest that remaineth for the people of God." p. 194.

In the next sermon, "On a wounded Spirit" (the text is taken from Prov. xviii. 14), the following passages occur.

"It is a principal requisite of the state of mind here supposed, that it should have no occasion for self-crimination and self-reproach. Guilt is timid and enfeebling. It creates suspicions and excites alarms which discompose and distress the spirit. Bereaved

of tranquillity and self-possession, and destitute of that confidence and resolution which rectitude of conduct inspires, the satisfaction which prosperity affords will be very partial and precarious; and the shock of adversity, real or apprehended, will sink it into despondence and despair." . . . "To the throne of the universe" (the preacher goes on to say), the man having this wounded spirit "cannot dare to lift up his eyes. The thought of Omnipotence, connected with justice, and inflicting deserved penalty, frets every faculty, and harrows up every feeling of his soul. Thus bereaved of every outward resource, barred from access to every refuge, and despairing of succour from every helper which the compass of creation might afford him; he retires within himself, and in the recesses of his own mind meets the most implacable foes," &c. &c.

One would imagine that the ambassador of Christ would have immediately proceeded to declare, in the most broad and explicit terms, that there is comfort and encouragement provided in the Gospel for that kind of troubled spirit which he had described, and for which in no other quarter is there any cure; that there is balm in Gilead, and a true Physician there;—that he would have gone on to preach the Gospel to the meek; to bind up the broken heart; and to open the prison door to them that are bound.

Our author, indeed, proceeds to say (but how cold and tame is he on this point, compared with the apostles of our Lord!); "The only effectual antidote to guilt, is a sense of divine forgiveness; and next to not having offended at all, is the state of those whose transgressions are pardoned; whom God, according to his gracious promises by Jesus Christ, has restored to peace and favour." Have we not then "all sinned and come short of the glory of God;" and are we not all "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus?"—But he adds,

"The most happy condition of all is, that of persons whose consciences acquit and approve them in the review of life, and who have no reason for timidity and despondence, whatever may be the events that befall them. Self-approved, their spirits will be

erect and firm, calm and tranquil; prepared for action or for suffering, in every scene of life. With these internal resources; with their mental powers composed and vigorous, and ready for any exertion which changing circumstances may require; they need not tremble; they will not be dejected, whatever may be the vicissitudes that await them."

Such is the author's mode (and a more unevangelical, a more unscriptural mode can hardly be conceived) of disposing of this interesting topic; except indeed, that, after an interval of about ten pages, cursory mention is made of the pardon of repenting transgressors, of the assistance of the humble and upright, and of the mediation of Christ, which is said to certify the acceptableness of a sincere though imperfect obedience.

We come now to the 11th Sermon, which is termed "A Preservative against Mistakes with Regard to the Nature and Efficacy of Repentance." This discourse harmonizes with the passages on which we have just animadverted; and the error is thus shewn to be consistent and systematic. The text is taken from Luke xv. 31: "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine." Our author, after describing the primary meaning of the parable, as applying to the Jews, observes, very justly, that it served to "answer another very important purpose," being "designed to encourage the hope of penitent transgressors of every age and nation." He adds,

"Some persons, however, not duly considering the *principal design* of this parable, as well as of other passages, that represent, in a manner the most forcible and satisfactory, the placability of God and his readiness to forgive true penitents, have deduced from them a very unwarrantable inference. Not satisfied with the only conclusion that can be justly drawn from such passages; that God is mercifully disposed to pardon repenting sinners; they have represented repentance as more acceptable and pleasing to God than a course of uniform obedience." p. 222.

We doubt whether any persons, and we more than doubt whether any considerable class of men, have "represented repentance as more acceptable to God than *uniform obedience*." The current doctrine of those to whom we conceive allusion to be made, is this, That *no men practice uniform obedience*; that they who are most ready to profess it, deceive themselves by a superficial appearance of goodness; that repentance is consequently an universal duty; and, moreover, that it is so represented in Scripture. In short, their doctrine is, that repentance, supposing it to be genuine, is more acceptable than that which is often *assumed* to be uniform obedience: and one of their authorities, among many others, is, the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican: "I tell you, this man" (the publican) "went down to his house justified rather than the other."

Dr. Rees proceeds:—

"Because the passions and feelings of penitent transgressors are more sensibly excited; because they produce a more observable effect; because persons in this state are more visibly solicitous to obtain pardon and favour; because their zeal is awakened by a sense of their danger, and by a concern to escape it; and because their change of conduct attracts notice; repentance has been thought more deserving of approbation and praise than the calm, steady, progressive practice of piety and virtue. It has received from the multitude a degree of applause, which has not been commonly bestowed on the conduct of those, who have seldom deviated from the path of duty; who have pursued, with few intermissions and fallings, a regular course of unoffending and irreproachable virtue; or who have had, comparatively, no occasion for repentance, or, at least, for any very observable change in their disposition or practice. There are many, I trust, of this character; who, under the influence of religious principles, imbibed in their youth and cherished in maturer years, have been preserved from any very culpable, flagrant, and repeated violation of their duty either to God or man. Although the most blameless and exemplary are subject to failings and imperfections, yet as they are neither wilful nor habitual, the gracious

Being, who knows our frame, overlooks and forgives them." pp. 222, 223.

In the course of our labours we have taken frequent occasion to remark, that religion in our days is more often instilled by means of early education, than it was in the time of the apostles; that the seed groweth up, "a man knoweth not how;" and that there is much danger of mistaking "the mere emotion of the animal feelings and passions," to borrow an expression of our author, for true repentance and conversion. So far, therefore, we are agreed with him; and we feel obliged to Dr. Rees, or to any one, who contributes to place this subject in a more perspicuous light. But the above passage is, in our judgment, most unguardedly expressed; and, if coupled with all that goes before and that follows after, is of most dangerous tendency. Dr. Rees speaks of those "who have pursued, with few intermissions, &c. a regular course of unoffending and irreproachable *virtue*." We do not altogether love this word "virtue," in the place in question. We have no objection to the occasional use of it: we by no means exclude it from our own vocabulary: but we apprehend that great evil may arise from employing it, after the manner of Dr. Rees in this place, as the generic term for goodness; as if it were another name for piety, for Christian faith, for holiness, for universal godliness. It is true, that our jealousy is lessened by our perceiving, that, a few lines afterwards, the expression "under the influence of religious principles," is slipped in. Even these terms, however, as we have had frequent occasion to be convinced by actual observation, is so general as to be in danger of being construed to mean but little. The man who violates no specific law of outward morality; who conforms to the general standard of the surrounding circle; and attains even to this low degree of virtue by the aid principally of re-

gard to reputation (a motive, which, we are sorry to say, is too much accredited by Dr. Rees in many parts of these volumes); is pretty sure to refer his own virtuous practice to a certain degree of latent religious principle, when compelled to a little temporary seriousness on the subject. Now, it seems to us to be one of the leading duties of a modern minister of Christ to unmask superficial characters of this class, for they constitute a great multitude; and to point out to them that *they* need that repentance, which they conceive to be only necessary for the publicans and sinners. We live in a country, of which the very constitution is favourable to the profession of a certain measure of worldly virtue; in an age, in which civilization has done much towards the improvement of the external manners; and under a dispensation of religion, which has indirectly meliorated the general mass even of those who in their hearts pay no submission to its authority: we are therefore in peculiar danger of mistaking a mere conformity to the prevailing taste in religion and morals, for Christian faith and practice, especially if we are of the number of those who duly attend some place of Christian worship. But are we therefore Christians? Is this to be "born again?" to be "renewed in the spirit of our minds?" to "put off the old man," and to put on that "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness?" Does it not follow, from the circumstances just stated, that it will be the great object of many persons in the present day to maintain appearances; to present a decent and polished exterior to the eye of that world in which they move, and in which every one is ambitious to rise, rather than to cultivate the internal graces of the soul?—Men do not now sin (we speak especially of persons in the middling and higher ranks) exactly after the manner of their ancestors.

They do not literally "slay the innocent;" they do not "wash their feet" in the blood of their adversaries; they do not keep back by fraud the hire of the labourer: the law of the land is too well executed to allow of their doing it. They do not, *in general*, run headlong "into every excess of riot." They have learnt to moralize on almost all subjects. They are become discreet and measured in their conduct. They do much, that is in itself good, from a wrong motive. They have devised soft and creditable names for all the practices and habits to which they are addicted. Are they covetous?—they think that they are providing for their family. Ambitious?—they profess to aim at a station of greater usefulness, as well as more worthy of their abilities. Selfish?—they take the prudent side. Unreasonably angry?—they think it their duty to shew a proper and manly spirit. Are they wanting in humility, and Christian charity?—they conceal from themselves the lamentable deficiency, by that general urbanity of manners, by that polite and unassuming phraseology, and by that real preference of others over themselves in a variety of little matters, which the school of the world has taught them;

"And smooth good breeding, supplemental grace,  
With lean performance apes the work of love."

They moreover deny the obligation to any very strict practice. The ancient virtue of the Gospel, they account to be puritanism: they explode it, as unfit for these liberal and enlightened days. They remove the land-marks which serious Christians of former days had established: and having enlarged their territory, they roam at pleasure over their own extensive district; they disport themselves within these ample bounds. In short, having no great temptation to commit the grosser vices from which

their very love of reputation requires them to refrain, they do almost every thing they like: and they claim at the same time, not indeed to be very pious or devout, but to be most honourable and respectable men, most amiable and exemplary women. — These, for the most part, are the persons who in their own eyes need no repentance; who constitute the great mass of "the unoffending and the virtuous." We are apprehensive that not a few of them, if they were to read this discourse, would fancy, and not unjustly, that they had a patron in Dr. Rees. Some of them, indeed, are too far removed from the contemplation of religious subjects to purchase any thing so grave as a book of sermons; and a large proportion of them, perhaps, will be preserved from the peril of which we are speaking, by the dread of Dr. Rees's heterodoxy;—a dread unaccompanied by any corresponding fear of his teaching laxity of practice. The Doctor, we allow, is often much too strict for many of these orthodox Christians.

We perfectly agree with Dr. Rees, that "innocence is undoubtedly preferable to repentance;" and that "it is better not to offend, than to be sorry for having offended;" and are well pleased to have an opportunity of reminding our readers of this simple truth; which, though worse than useless, when it is intended to imply, as it is on the present occasion, that there are individuals to be found, who have been *innocent* and *void of offence* in the sight of God, constitutes, nevertheless, a most important and salutary maxim, applicable to the daily, and even hourly occurrences of life. Let it ever be remembered, that the call to repentance is universal in the New Testament. John the Baptist went forth, and preached it, without the least limitation of his expressions, as a preparative for the coming of Christ. Our Saviour no sooner appeared, than he adopted, in this respect,

the very words of his forerunner. He warned his hearers not to think that the duty was confined to a few special offenders: "Think you that they were sinners above all the men that dwelt in Judea? I tell you nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He delivered the parable of the Pharisee and Publican for the sake of discountenancing the plea of those who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." Before he left the world, he enjoined the ordinance of Baptism; — a rite typical of repentance, and the inward purification of the Spirit, in the case of all who should be called into the Christian faith. And after this period we find the apostle expressly coupling "repentance towards God" with "faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" these two expressions being evidently intended to designate the two great features of that Gospel which he was employed to teach. We, Protestants, deem the Papists guilty of a departure from Scripture, when they refuse to the laity the communion in both kinds, inasmuch as our Lord united in one precept the command to take both the bread and the wine, and addressed it generally to his disciples: — have not the Scriptures also united the precept "to repent" and "to believe;" and must we not, therefore, under all the circumstances of the case, consider each of these duties as co-extensive with the other? We should all believe, says Dr. Rees; and we should some of us repent. He is something of an unitarian in this sense: he is, in certain cases, for communion only in one kind.

To the argument, that there are many persons "of unoffending and irreproachable virtue," whom an indiscriminate call to repentance may too much discredit and discourage, we reply, That there were also men of religious integrity in the days of Christ; but that the precept, nevertheless, was not modified for their sakes; and that their minds un-

doubtedly were not embarrassed or misled. We do not read that either the holy Simeon, or the devout Anna, or the upright Nathaniel, deemed the universality of the terms in which repentance was proclaimed, the smallest matter of offence. They doubtless had a strong sense, not only of their own past offences, but of their own tendency to evil, and of the surrounding iniquity of even the nominal church of God, and would rejoice to hear the wholesome doctrine so broadly and so vehemently urged.

Our author appears to us to have fallen into a material misconception respecting the meaning of one sentence of his text: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." He considers this expression as intended to signify that the elder son, or Jew, "had never deserted him, and had never wilfully offended him;" and that he "was therefore the object of his Father's unabated and distinguished regard." Now the New Testament teaches us, that the Jewish nation were at this very period about to be cast off for their sins, and especially for the sin, if Dr. Rees will allow us so to call it, of claiming salvation on the ground of their assumed obedience to all the works of their law. The Gentiles, who renounced this species of claim, are said by the apostle Paul to have "attained unto righteousness; but Israel did not attain it. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone." It seems necessary, therefore, to limit the meaning of the expression, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." It may be construed as referring to those superior opportunities which were afforded them; inasmuch as they had much advantage every way, and the first offer of the Gospel was also made to them: of these privileges they might or might not reap the benefit. The language of Scripture, in the secondary and inciden-

tal parts of the parables, is often purposely negligent; of which we have a remarkable proof in the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, which is extremely illustrative of the passage now under consideration. There the several labourers are first represented as receiving each a penny: in the sequel, the labourers who came first into the vineyard—namely, the Jews—are described as complaining of the communication of the same benefit to the labourers who came in at the late hour—namely, the Gentiles: and in the conclusion it is plainly intimated, that the same men who *had at first been said to receive their penny*, would ultimately fail to obtain any share of the benefits of the kingdom of Christ. The children of the kingdom, it is said, would be cast out: “For the first shall be last, and the last first; for many are called, but few chosen.”

The next sermon, on “the Omnipresence of God,” is generally good. We must except, however, a passage, which, as is usual with this writer, describes far too weakly the frailty of man. The following is the concluding paragraph.—

“The presence of God should animate us amidst the weaknesses of our nature, and the trials of our state. It should inspire us with an emulation, urging us to aim at high degrees of religious and virtuous attainments, rendering us ambitious to excel in the cultivation and practice of whatever God requires and approves, and encouraging us under a sense of our frailty and in our conflict with the difficulties and temptations to which we are liable. God is with us as our observer and our helper. What farther encouragement can we need or desire, in any scene of service, in any season of trial, that may yet await us?”

“Amidst all the vicissitudes of our condition, as well as the conflicts to which a course of integrity and obedience may expose us, the presence of God will administer consolation and delight, and it will engage our trust and acquiescence. Far from human help, or in circumstances where human power can be of no avail, the thought of God's presence with us will be animating and delightful. To him let us direct our views. In his providence let us repose our

trust; the aids of his power and the comforts of his goodness, let us supplicate. Remote or ineffectual as every other power may be, he is never far from us: at home and abroad; in solitude and in society; in a time of bodily affliction, mental anguish or worldly distress, he is a God at hand and not afar off. The sigh which can reach no human ear; the tear that falls unnoticed by our fellow-creatures; the sigh and the tear, which we may wish most studiously to conceal; or which, if regarded, can procure no sufficient relief, God will compassionate, and in one mode or other he will administer help and comfort. To him then let us recur; and let it be our solicitude so to think and act, that we may have good ground to hope for his pity and succour. We shall thus be prepared for expecting the consolations of his presence in that awful hour, when flesh and heart fail us; and when human friendship, however sincere, ardent, and powerful, can be of no avail. Having committed our spirits to God through Jesus Christ, in the way of well-doing, may they be safely conducted to those mansions in which the presence of God, and of the Redeemer, and of a multitude of glorified and happy beings, will be a source of unmixed, uninterrupted, and everlasting felicity. Amen.” pp. 254-6.

The sermon on “Practical Atheism” furnishes some degree of antidote (but a very weak one, in our judgment) for the evil which the sermon on Repentance is likely to produce. The two discourses on “The Progress of Vice” partake of the faults common to this author. Here, also, he speaks of “repentance and reformation being only the means which the goodness of God, and the grace of the Gospel, have provided for our obtaining benefits, which would be more easily and more effectually secured by rectitude of conduct.” The following description of progress in sin, however, is just, as well as striking:

“A person, when he first enters into such society” (that of the ungodly) “is thoughtful and timid. Remorse and self-reproach disturb his peace and retard his career. He cannot at once divest himself of those principles and feelings, which are the effects of early culture and the attendants on innocence and virtue. He is a bashful, trembling, self-convicted transgressor. He is conscious of an antipathy to the course which he is pur-

uing. What his associates applaud, he secretly condemns. He hesitates in yielding to their seductions. He occasionally declines partaking of their guilty pleasures; and does not run with them into the same excess of riot. But repeated acts ripen into habits. Unruly passions gain the ascendancy. Reason and conscience feebly remonstrate; and he gradually disengages himself from those restraints, which he finds, by daily experience, to answer no other purpose besides that of perplexing and disquieting him. Instances of misconduct, that were once the effects of accident more than of design; that proceeded from the sudden attack of an unexpected temptation; that originated more in the seduction of others than in his own inclination and purpose; and that were occasional and infrequent, now become intentional and wilful, deliberate and habitual. He, who once trembled, is now bold. He, who was once reluctant in yielding to his seducers, readily consents, and seeks the temptation which he shunned. He, who was in the rear of a band of licentious associates, and followed at a distance and with faltering step, now takes the lead and occupies the foremost rank. He, whose reflections often pained and shamed him, has now few, if any, intervals of self-condemnation and self-reproach. He, who was once ensnared and deluded by the wiles of others, is become a tempter himself." pp. 298—300.

The following passage, in the sermon on Contentment, is well worthy of the observation of men of wealth:—

"We may not probably err in asserting, that the most exemplary and useful characters are not generally found amongst the most exalted and affluent;—amongst those, whom wealth corrupts and misleads; whom rank separates from the multitude; whose station estranges them from the humble abodes of poverty and wretchedness; and whose abundance renders them insensible to wants, which they have never experienced, and which they have had no opportunity of familiarly and frequently observing. Considerations of this kind should teach us candour in passing judgment on those whose condition elevates them above the common ranks of society, and from whom, at the same time, more is usually expected than any have a right to claim. But they also lead us to conclude, that affluence, and all

the circumstances that attend it, are not favourable to general usefulness. What is the dictate of fact and experience? Allowing for instances that ought to be excepted, some of which have fallen under our own notice; are we warranted in affirming, that men's usefulness, with respect either to their example or their beneficence, has increased in proportion to their possessions? Have we not observed and lamented the pernicious effects of affluence? Has it not separated some from the profession of their youth and riper years? Has it not made them indifferent to a cause, which, in less conspicuous stations and with inferior abilities, they have liberally and laudably supported? Where, then, are the children and descendants of those, who, whilst they were acquiring opulence, were exemplary in their religious profession, and zealous in their attachment to it? Are the principles of their parents and ancestors less true and important now than they were, when they produced visible effects? Is the cause to which they were devoted, less deserving of support? Does it less need the countenance of their example and the concurrence of their liberality? *Why, then, is the house of God forsaken?* Why do we survey our religious assemblies with regret? and wish, but wish in vain, to find the places of the friends of our youth occupied by their descendants? What but the baneful influence of wealth has produced these pernicious, these deplorable effects?" pp. 399—401.

Our author indicates, in a very pleasing manner, the same feelings of regret at the declension of many of the rising generation, in his sermon entitled, on "The Anxiety of Parents for the Virtue of their Children."

We have thus travelled through the first volume of these sermons, and have put our readers in possession of the general character of the divinity of the author. We shall be more brief in our comments on the remaining volume: there, nevertheless, are so many parts of it which claim our attention, and will also call for farther animadversion, that we have found it necessary to defer the remainder of the review to another number.

(To be continued.)

## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

### GREAT BRITAIN.

IN the press: A Series of Letters from Madame la Marquise du Deffaud to the Earl of Orford and to Voltaire, with a Life of the Lady;—A Treatise on Mortification, by Mr. Lee, Surgeon, of Shields;—An Inquiry into the Nature, Causes, and Treatment of Impediments of Speech, Cases of Amentia, partial Derangements, &c. of the Human Faculties, in a Letter from Mr. Thelwall to Mr. Cline;—The Vestibule of Eloquence, being Exercises in Recitation, with an introductory Discourse, by Mr. Thelwall;—A History of the Inquisition in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with Plates;—and Travels through Morocco, by Dr. Buffa, in 1806.

Preparing for publication: An historical Narrative of the War in the Levant, from 1793 to 1801, with Maps and Views;—A collective Edition of the Works of the late Bishop of London, by Mr. Hodgson, Rector of St. George's, Hanover Square.

Mr. Cumming has in the press a new and enlarged edition of his Observations on the Properties of Cylindrical and Conical Wheels; to which he has added a Supplement, containing estimates of the national advantages that may reasonably be expected from the investigations of the select committees of the House of Commons appointed to take into consideration the acts now in force requiring the use of broad wheels, &c., with such extracts from their reports as relate to that subject. This work will be ready for publication in the early part of the ensuing month.

The first number of a German newspaper, to be continued twice a week, was published on the 2d instant, by Messrs. Vogel and Schulze, Poland Street.

The Rev. John Hunt has circulated proposals for publishing, by subscription, the whole of the Works of the Rev. John Howe, including at least one volume of discourses never before published.

The great improvements intended to be made in Shoreham harbour, have met the wishes of the public, not only of that county, but also of the mercantile interests of the metropolis, so that they are immediately to

be carried into effect after the next sessions of parliament; and it is further intended, that a canal from the docks at Shoreham shall open a communication with Worthing, and also that a canal, or iron rail-way, shall extend to the eastward, as far as Lewes. This plan will not only produce a place of safety for merchant ships, but also for those of his Majesty's navy. The central situation of the port of Shoreham will, no doubt, make it an object worthy the attention of government, as the improvements at that port will not only allow room for merchant-ships, but also for a fleet of transports to assemble, thereby expediting the shipping of troops, without unnecessarily harassing them by long marches and circuitous routes. It is also in contemplation to extend the present design much farther, as from the port of Shoreham being the nearest to that of London, and the navigation of that harbour being lately much improved, and extending, at the present time, nearly to the town of Horsham; and, from a survey that has been taken, it is concluded that, at a moderate expense, the same may be joined with the Thames at Guildford, thereby making it an object of great national utility and importance.

Forty boats, which have been employed in the herring fishery, on the Norfolk coast, between the 25th of September and 1st of November last, caught upwards of fourteen millions of fish, which sold to the merchants for between 16 and 17,000*l.*, and gave to each person employed in the fishery, independent of the expenses of the vessel, about 50*l.*—The herring fishery at Yarmouth has been remarkably productive, a greater quantity having been caught than ever was known. The boats have come in repeatedly with twenty lasts, and, in some instances, as many as twenty-three or twenty-four lasts have been brought in at a time. A last of herrings is 10,000.

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, have lately presented Mr. John Morison with their silver medal and forty guineas, for his ingenuity in providing himself with artificial arms, after he had experienced the misfortune to lose his natural ones by the discharge of a cannon. This worthy man, who

lives in the neighbourhood of Holborn Bars, undertakes to supply other persons labouring under similar misfortunes with that which he deplures, with artificial arms, legs, and other instruments, adapted to almost every purpose of life.

Common spirits of turpentine have been recently administered by several medical gentlemen of the metropolis, with good effect, in the cure of tape worm. The doses given were in some cases so large as two ounces, but those of half an ounce at a time, repeated twice a day, were generally found to answer the purpose. The vehicle in which the turpentine was administered, was generally honey.

It is a fact which ought to be known to all housewives, that if they begin to grate a nutmeg at the stalk end, it will prove hollow throughout; whereas the same nutmeg, grated from the other end, would have proved sound and solid to the last. The centre of a nutmeg consists of a number of fibres issuing from the stalk, and its continuation through the centre of the fruit, the other ends of which fibres, though closely surrounded, and pressed by the fruit, do not adhere to it. When the stalk is grated away, those fibres having lost their hold, gradually drop out, and the nutmeg appears hollow; and as more of the stalk is grated away, others drop out in succession, and the hollow continues through the whole nut. By beginning at the contrary end, the fibres above-mentioned are grated off at their core end, with the surrounding fruit, and do not drop out and cause a hole. Another circumstance worth knowing, is, that in consequence of the great value of the oil of nutmegs, it is often extracted from the nuts that are exposed to sale, by which they are rendered of very little value. To ascertain the quality of nutmegs, force a pin into them, and if good, however dry they may appear, the oil will be seen oozing out all round the pin, from the compression occasioned in the surrounding parts.

The Rev. James Hall, has, for several months past, been usefully engaged in experiments for procuring flax from broom. This is done by the following process:—Steep the twigs, or the former year's branches, preferring the most vigorous shoots, for two or three weeks, more or less, according to the heat of the season, in stagnant water, or boil them for an hour, in water. This done, the flax separates freely from the twigs; and where there is not machinery for the purpose, it may be easily stripped off by children, or others, at any time, when not

quite dry; as hemp is pulled from the stalks. What adds to the value of this discovery is, that on being cleared of the flax, and steeped for some time in boiling water, the twigs, or wood, become tough and beautifully white, and are worth, at a medium, from a shilling to eighteen-pence a pound, for making carpet-brooms, &c. When stripped from the twigs, the flax requires only to be well washed in cold water, then wrung, and shaken well, and hung out to dry, previously to its being sent off to the paper manufacturers, &c. Professor Davy has bleached some of it for Mr. Hall, who has also seen it spun. The same gentleman also observes, that the fibres of all kinds of mallows are particularly beautiful, especially the *malva-sylvestris*. They are finer than camel's hair, which they somewhat resemble, and there is no difficulty in procuring them.

#### OXFORD.

Dr. C. H. Hall succeeds Dr. C. Jackson in the deanery of Christ Church.

Dr. Phillimore is appointed professor of civil law, in the room of Dr. Lawrence, deceased.

Rev. W. Crabtree is appointed master of University college, in the room of Rev. Dr. Smyth, deceased.

The following subjects are proposed for the Chancellor's prizes, for the present year: viz.—For Latin verses—"Pyramides Ægyptiacæ. For an English essay—"What are the arts, in the cultivation of which the moderns have been less successful than the ancients?" For a Latin essay—"In Philosophia, quæ de vita et moribus est illustranda, quænam præcipuo sermonum Socraticorum fuit excellentia?"

The first of the above subjects is intended for those gentlemen of the university who have not exceeded four years from the time of their matriculation; and the other two for such as have exceeded four, but not completed seven years.

#### CAMBRIDGE.

In our number for November, we were guilty of a mistake in noticing the election of public orator in the university of Cambridge. The competition for that office lay between the Rev. R. Tatham, and the Rev. R. Walpole. The former was elected by a majority of 20.

Mr. J. Smith has been elected printer; and the Rev. W. A. Pemberton registry of the university.

The subject for the Norrisian prize for

the ensuing year is, "the connection of religion and learning."

On the late Jubilee day, the master (the Bishop of Bristol) and seniors of Trinity college voted a donation of fifty guineas to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Hulsean prize is this year adjudged to the Rev. W. Heath, fellow of King's college, for his dissertation "On the advantage of difficulties in religion; or an attempt to shew the good effects which result, or which might result, from the proofs of revelation being of a probable rather than of a demonstrative kind."

The following is the subject for the Hulsean premium for the present year:—

"The remarkable propensity of the Jews to idolatry before the Babylonish captivity, compared with their exemption from it, in general, afterwards, affords the unbeliever no just ground for rejecting the scriptural account of the miracles in the time of Moses and Joshua."

The first and second wranglers of the present year are Messrs. Maule and Brundreth, both of Trinity. In our next number we purpose to give a list of those who have obtained academical honours.

#### FRANCE.

For some time the curiosity of the Parisians has been gratified by Messrs. Franconi, with a spectacle truly extraordinary; that of the most shy and timid animal, a stag, tamed and trained to the same performances as the most docile and courageous horse. Led by his instructor, the docile animal advances into the arena, looking round on every side with an air equally expressive of gentleness and intelligence. At the command of his master, he bends his knees, and respectfully bows his head. M. Franconi gets upon his back, cracks his whip, and fires pistols, at which the animal shews neither fear nor alarm. After this first experiment, he is left to himself, and made to perform the exercises of the manège, like the best-trained horse. He sets off at full gallop: turns and stops at the word of command. He leaps over rails with wonderful agility, and even clears two horses at once. After every performance, he stands still, fixes his eyes on his master, and endeavours to discover from his looks whether he is satisfied. M. Franconi then goes up to him, pats him, and bestows other caresses, for which the gentle animal testifies the highest gratitude. In the last place, a triumphal arch, charged with fire-works, is

erected in the middle of the air; it is set on fire: and the stag, impatient for the signal, starts off, as soon as it is given, and passes twice under the blazing arch, amidst the shouts and applauses of the spectators.

M. Chaptal has recently made experiments to ascertain the nature of seven specimens of colour, found in a colour-shop at Pompeii. No. 1, the only one which has not received any preparation from the hand of man, is a greenish and sopanaceous argil, in the state in which nature presents it in various parts of the globe, and resembling that known by the name of Terra di Verona. —No. 2, is an ochre of a beautiful yellow, all the impurities of which have been removed by washing. As this substance turns red by calcination with a gentle fire, the yellow colour, which it has preserved without alteration, affords a new proof, that the ashes which covered Pompeii retained but a slight degree of heat.—No. 3, is a brown red, like that employed at present for coarse work, and is produced by the calcination of the preceding.—No. 4, is a pumice-stone, extremely light and white; the texture is very fine and close.—The three others are compound colours, which M. Chaptal was obliged to analyse, in order to ascertain their constituent principles. From his experiments on No. 5, which is of a deep blue, and in small pieces of the same form, it appears to be composed of oxyde of copper, lime, and alumine. It resembles ash-blues in the nature of its principles, but differs from them in its chemical properties. It seems to be the result, not of precipitation, but of the commencement of vitrification; and the process by which it was obtained by the ancients is lost.—No. 6, is a sand of a light blue, mixed with some small whitish grains. On analysing it, M. Chaptal discovered in it the same principles as in the preceding; indeed, it may be considered as a composition of the same nature, in which there is a greater proportion of lime and alumine.—No. 7, is of a beautiful roseate-hue: it is soft to the touch; is reduced between the fingers to an impalpable powder; and leaves upon the skin a pleasing carnation colour. From M. Chaptal's experiments, he looks upon it as a real lake, in which the colouring principle is united with alumine. In its properties, its hue, and the nature of its colouring principle, it has nearly a complete analogy with madder lake. The preservation of this lake for 19 centuries, without perceptible alteration, is a phenomenon which cannot fail to excite the astonishment of chemists.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

## MISSION TO TARTARY.

FROM the last accounts of the state of this interesting mission, published by the Edinburgh Missionary Society, we shall give such extracts as may be sufficient for the information of our readers.

During the last winter the missionaries enjoyed unusually good health, and though they felt severely the want of regular communication with this country, occasioned by the war, yet they were diligently employed in forwarding the great objects of their mission. The following extracts are taken from the letters of the missionaries.

March 2, 1809. "Owing to the severity of the weather we have not thought it advisable to appoint any of our number as yet to visit the villages. On the evening of the 25th we had two severe shocks of an earthquake, the one immediately succeeding the other.

"Kattegary, who was with us for a few days lately, laboured much, during his visit, to convert to Christianity his uncle Islam Gerry, who shewed him great kindness, and listened more to what he said than was agreeable to some of the Tartars. Ali, the son of Shaker, a Mirzah, one of whose wives is Islam Gerry's daughter, called Kattegary an infidel dog, and asserted, that it would be meritorious to kill him, on account of his efforts to make his countrymen Christians. Our people seemed to be highly pleased when Kattegary preached to the family on the 19th.

"We have ransomed Omar for 700 rubles: and we understand that his master, Kubal, repents greatly of having sold him. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the people in general are so far from expressing indignation on account of Omar's becoming a Christian, and being ransomed by us, that, except the chiefs, the greater part express satisfaction, and some appear to be really glad, especially his relations. Omar discovers a strong desire to be better acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, and to be taught to read.

"The chiefs continue to shew great fierceness against us and Christianity."

"Mr. Fraser and I," says Mr. Brunton, "have had much conversation lately with two Jetishkool Mirzas, one of whom has been in Constantinople, and other parts of Turkey,

and is more intelligent than his countrymen in general. The other, who is his nephew, can read better, but knows less, and yet is far from being ignorant. They informed us, that the Jetishkools and Jambalooks doubted the truth of their religion; and that several of them, particularly the priests, had, some secretly and some openly, desired them to inquire particularly about our religion, bring them some of our tracts, (which several of them have no doubt read,) and observe the way in which we performed religious worship. One of them attended for this purpose on Sunday last (Feb. 26), when the service was performed in the Tartar language, which he repeatedly said was not bad. This Mirzah seemed to be convinced that some of the Jetishkool and Jambalook priests would listen favourably to our religion. He told Mr. Fraser, that the best way to convert the Tartars, was to talk to them secretly. I was not a little pleased to find a Tartar Mirzah exactly of my own opinion with regard to this point.

"The report of the Besholbais having renounced Mohammedism gains ground more and more. Various circumstances, which would lengthen out a letter too much, might be mentioned to shew the effect which our tracts have had.

"It has, as you know, been much disputed whether Abdy died a Christian, a Mohammedan, or neither. If he was not a Christian, he made many a false profession. Last time but one that I saw him, he told me, he intended to give his family a written permission to stay along with us, should they choose it. It is probable he did so, although we have never heard of it. To Mr. Fraser, who saw him the day that he became ill, he professed his firm belief in the truth of Christianity; and bade him give his best wishes to me, and tell me, that he firmly believed the doctrines which he had learned from the New Testament. The day preceding this, Jellorum Harrison heard him making the same profession, in the presence of a great number of people, before Kubal, who immediately fell into a violent passion, and left him.

"I cannot describe the grief with which I am obliged to mention the death of our friend Sultan Islam Gerry, who although he had left us twice, out of hatred to our reli-

gion, could not be induced, either by threats, or by promises, to leave us again. His capacious mind, and extensive knowledge, considering the country to which he belonged, are well known to every member of the settlement. Twice, last night, after I was in bed, he told Adam and another of our young people, whom I had sent to inquire how he was, that he anxiously wished to see me as soon as possible. He was satisfied when I sent him word that I should go in the morning; but although I went early, it was not till he had sent the priest once, the priest's son twice, and a Mirzah and a slave once, to call me. When I went he said almost nothing, but looked as if he wished to say something, which he hesitated about expressing.

"The priest sat down on the side of the dying old Sultan's bed, repeated the Mohammedan creed, and said several prayers, to which the bye-standers, who were not few, added their Amen; but the Sultan added neither Amen nor sign.—A Tartar Mirzah pressed him to make a profession of his faith, which the Tartars demand of all who are dying, and seem to think necessary to their salvation. The Sultan replied, that he believed in the Lord. As this was far from being satisfactory, he was earnestly pressed to make a farther profession; but he could not be prevailed with to say any thing more than that he trusted in God, and this he often said without being urged. He never once mentioned Mohammed's name. This no Tartar would deny to be a real sign of infidelity. It cannot be pretended that he was unable to speak, for to tell all the other things that he said would require a whole sheet. Omar and others think that the fear of distressing his family, by being left unburied, prevented him from professing his faith in Christ. He confessed to Mr. Galloway, a few weeks ago, that the arguments in the first printed tract, in defence of the death, resurrection, and divinity of Christ, were very powerful; and left him much affected, and incapable of advancing the smallest objection. He was wont often to read the tracts, and Matthew's Gospel.

"We do not think," say the missionaries, "that the directors should be discouraged for want of success. We do not desire to boast; yet we humbly hope, that our labour has not been in vain. When we consider the number of children we have gathered in from among the heathen—the number of adults that have been baptized—the printing and circulating of a vast number of

tracts, and particularly of the Gospel by Matthew, in the native language—the inquiry that prevails, and the suspicions of the truth of Mohammedism that have been excited—the alarm of the chiefs—the apparent disposition of whole nations to receive the Christian religion, produced by our conversations, and the reading of our tracts—and especially when we consider, our almost miraculous preservation till this period, amid the ravages of the hostile incursions, and almost constant warfare of the different tribes around us, we cannot help pleasing ourselves with the idea, that Providence has dealt kindly with us."

"April 10. Abizawan Ogbli Musa, who was in the Kabardian country lately, came here yesterday, and told us, that he had seen Kamuat, the Sonna, who visited us about three years ago. Kamuat had informed him that the Sonna prince, his master, had directed him to desire us to send some person to instruct his people in the principles of the Christian religion. This business Kamuat committed to Musa, who, though a Mohammedan, seems anxious to have this design accomplished.—Mr. Brunton, foreseeing the danger that would arise from the Kabardians, told Musa that our people were little accustomed to go so far from home; that we had much to occupy us in our own place; and that we could not at present comply with the request of the Sonna prince; but that, if he sent two sober men, of good judgment, well skilled in the Turkish language, we should endeavour to make their residence comfortable during their stay, instruct them in the principles of Christianity, and, if possible, teach them to read.

"The reports are still current with regard to the tribes on the other side the Kuban having renounced the Mohammedan faith. It appears that our tracts have had some influence in that part of the country; and if it were in our power, we should open a correspondence with them.

"It has been repeatedly mentioned, that a Beshelbay village had renounced the Mohammedan religion: but it is now reported, that they were soon forced by their neighbours to return to their old faith. This violence, however, appears to have done little for the support of Mohammedism in that quarter; for the majority of the people in that part of the Turkish dominions which lies between us and the Black Sea, are said to have resumed their former religion. This event, I am informed, has excited the utmost fierceness in some of the chiefs, who continue

stedfast to the faith of their prophet. Our settlement will need to be on their guard in such circumstances, especially as we are bitterly blamed for the apostacy of the tribes in the mountains. Some of the Mohammedan doctors, who are suspected of being favourably disposed towards our religion, have, within these few days, been dreadfully threatened. Keekshec, who is perhaps the first doctor in the country, has been severely persecuted for reading and commending our tracts."

"May 1. On the 20th of April, General Bulgakoff sent Kattgary to request one of us to visit him at Georghievsk. On going thither Mr. Paterson found that the general sent for one of us, with the express view of thanking us for the interest which we take in the welfare of the natives. Mr. Paterson conversed a long time with him on the state of the country, and took an opportunity of laying before him the wretched condition of the common people. When he was told that the chiefs persecuted the people for reading our tracts, he was much displeased, and seemed to wish success to our exertions in Christianizing the natives."

"The persecution against the people in our immediate neighbourhood, for reading our tracts and commending our religion, still continues. Not long since, we learned, that the chiefs entered into an agreement among themselves, at the fast of Ramazan, to apprehend any priest who might be found to hear or to read our books, and whip him to death. Notwithstanding the hostile measures of the chiefs, however, the people evidently wish to know more about us and Christianity. Several of them have come privately and asked books, begging us not to tell any person that they had received them. There are also a considerable number of young people learning to read. We hope that this will pave the way for the dissemination of Christian principles among them, by means of tracts. May the time soon arrive, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters do the channel of the deep."

"We have heard nothing more as yet about the Sonnas. From reports which daily increase, it appears, that our information respecting the commotions on account of religion among the mountain tribes was correct. Hasan Seid told me to-day that one would be surprised to see the number of scholars throughout the country: that some Effendis taught more than an hundred; and that the chiefs had advised the people to get their

children taught to read, that they might be able to withstand our arguments, and defend their own religion. I was told yesterday by a Mola, who knows the mountain tribes, that Arslau Beg had attacked the Beshelbay village which renounced Mohammedism some time ago, and had carried off all the property belonging to it. The Effendi of the village, whose name is Ali, justified Arslau Beg's conduct, and declared all the inhabitants of the village to be infidels, except one man, to whom Arslau Beg gave back 400 sheep, which he had carried off along with the property of the rest of the villagers. Two men were put to death. Yet it does not appear that any of the people have been reclaimed. On the contrary, it is said, that many more throughout the mountains are forsaking the religion of their fathers. The Mola who gave me this information, is an intelligent man, and has travelled over the greater part of the Turkish empire. He told me, that we were the subject of conversation every where, both on this, and on the other side of the Kuban."

#### OTAHEITE.

In consequence of a serious war which had broken out in Otaheite, the greater part of the missionaries had thought it necessary for their safety to retire to the neighbouring island of Huaheine, where they had been received in a friendly manner. Four missionaries had been left at Otaheite, but were expected soon to follow the others. The war, it was thought, would end in the total overthrow of Pomarre's government.

#### CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

A mission has been established among the Namaquas, which is said to proceed favourably; and the surrounding tribes have expressed a great desire to hear the Gospel. The missionaries' congregation has increased to upwards of 700. Besides these, many, who are obliged for the sake of their cattle to live near water, come occasionally to hear the word of God, or one of the missionaries goes to them to instruct them and their children; for which reason, observe the missionaries, we want help in our labours, for we have a large field before us.

#### SPAIN.

A decree of Joseph Bonaparte, of the 10th December, contains the following regulations: viz.

"Considering that it is repugnant to the spirit of the Gospel, and the purity of the

discipline of the best ages of the church, that the ecclesiastical order should be diverted from its legitimate avocations by legal concerns; and, at the same time, that the public interest requires the unity of jurisdiction:

"From the date of the present decree, the ecclesiastical power shall cease to exercise any judicial jurisdiction, \* well civil as criminal, which is found to devolve to the secular magistrates.

"All causes for trial, whether civil, criminal, or of any other description, pending be-

tween various suitors in the ecclesiastical courts, shall be transferred, according to the character and nature of their transaction, to their respective secular tribunals.

"The judges, deciding in such causes, shall apply to them the regulations of canon-law in vigour in Spain, as would have guided the ecclesiastical judges, to whom such causes would otherwise have been submitted. The mode and form of such proceedings, as well as the reiteration of each cause, must be exclusively determined by the law which regulates the secular tribunals."

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## VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

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### FRANCE.

WE had scarcely closed our View of Public Affairs for the last month, when a new and most extraordinary scene was exhibited in France. The long reported decree of separation of Bonaparte and Josephine has at length taken place, and their marriage has been formally dissolved by the French Senate. The cause of this singular divorce is stated to be the want of issue on the part of the emperor, and his solicitude for his people, which makes him desirous, with a view to their happiness, of leaving a son to succeed him, educated by himself in all the imperial arts. This separation has taken place with the professed consent of all the parties concerned. Josephine is made to come forward, and declare that she willingly sacrifices her own happiness to that of France: and Bonaparte, in his speech on the occasion, expresses himself to have been fully satisfied with his consort; but that there is no sacrifice beyond his courage, when the welfare of France requires it. Josephine is to retain the title and rank of Empress Queen, with a dowry of two millions of livres (near 100,000*l.*) a year. Nothing appears to be as yet fixed with respect to a successor to Josephine.

The annual Exposition of the state of the French empire, which has been laid before the Legislative Body, is little more than an amplification of Bonaparte's speech, of which we gave an abstract in our last number. It affirms, that, when the English landed at Walcheren, all the departments gave striking proofs of their attachment, excepting that of the Sarre; which is therefore to be deprived, for 25 years, of the

rights of citizens, and subjected to a double contribution;—a severity which is doubtless intended to be exemplary. "Holland," it is said, "is only a part of France; an *illusion* of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, the great arteries of the French empire."—"Should Spain free her colonies, it will be her own fault. The Emperor will never oppose the independence of the continental nations of America: that independence is in the natural order of events; it is just; it agrees with the true interests of all European powers. Should the people of Mexico and Peru wish to raise themselves to the elevation of a noble independence, France will never oppose them, provided they enter into no connection with England."—Bonaparte's policy, with respect to the South American colonies, is obvious. By thus engaging to countenance their independence, he hopes to establish a prior claim to their favour and confidence, and ultimately, perhaps, to obtain an ascendancy over them, to the exclusion of the English. For while Bonaparte thus comes forward as the assertor of their rights, we shall probably be prevented, by our relations with the mother country, from affording even the slightest expression of our approbation to any efforts which they may make to deliver themselves from their present state of oppression and degradation.

### SPAIN.

Gerona has been forced to open its gates to the besieging army, after a most gallant and determined resistance, second only to that of Sagagoza. It surrendered by capitulation, on the 11th of December. The terms

were, that the garrison should be prisoners of war, and that the persons and property of the inhabitants should be respected.

French troops appear to be pouring into Spain in great numbers: 350,000 men, it is said, are to be sent there. The English army under Lord Wellington has taken a position on the frontiers of Portugal. The headquarters were at Coimbra about the beginning of this month.

#### SWEDEN.

The late King of Sweden has been removed, with his family, to Stralsund, whence he is to proceed to Switzerland, which, it seems, is the appointed place of his exile. He will there be in the power of Bonaparte, who, we fear, retains too deep an impression of resentment for the inflexible resistance which he experienced from this gallant monarch, to use his power generously.

Peace has been concluded between Sweden and Denmark, and also between Sweden and France.

#### NORTH AMERICA.

The American Congress began its sittings on the 27th of November. The Message of the President treats at considerable length of the relations of the United States with the belligerent powers, and especially with England. The disavowal by his Majesty of Mr. Erskine's provisional arrangement, is spoken of as a measure which was not justified by the circumstances of the case, and of which no satisfactory explanation had as yet been officially made to the Government of the United States. The attack on the Chesapeake is styled "a murderous aggression;" and the conduct of Mr. Jackson is adverted to in strong terms of reprehension. "Forgetting the respect due to all governments, he did not refrain from imputations on this, which required that no farther communications should be received from him"—but "a ready attention will be given to communications through any channels which may be substituted."—Of France, all that is said is, that, though her "trespasses on our commercial rights have long been the subject of our just remonstrances, the posture of our relations does not correspond with the measures taken on the part of the United States to effect a favourable change."—The expenses of the year 1809; the President states, would be met by the money remaining in the treasury from former years: but, owing to the failure of the revenues arising from commerce, a loan would be required for the ensuing year. In enumerat-

ing the many blessings enjoyed by the United States notwithstanding the external wrongs and vexations to which they have been subjected, Mr. Madison observes, that health had never been more universal; that the produce of the year had been ample; that the country every where presented proofs of enterprize, extensive capital, and improvement; and that its dependence on foreign countries, both for raw materials and useful manufactures, was greatly diminished. "Recollecting always," he adds, "that for every advantage we are indebted to that Divine Providence, whose goodness has been so remarkably extended to this nation, it becomes us to cherish a devout gratitude, and to implore from the same Omnipotent Source a blessing on the consultations and measures about to be undertaken for the welfare of our beloved country."

The correspondence between Mr. Jackson and the American Secretary of State has been published; and, while it must be admitted that neither of these gentlemen has always chosen the most conciliatory modes of expression, we must nevertheless think, that the former has greatly the advantage of the latter in argument. It would be quite inconsistent with our limits to give a detailed exposition of the points in dispute, many of which were exceedingly trivial, though urged with much heat and acrimony. The circumstance which afforded a pretext to the American Government for breaking off all intercourse with Mr. Jackson, was, that gentleman's having affirmed, and, after the fact had been denied by the American Government, having repeated the affirmation, that it was known to that government that Mr. Erskine had departed from his instructions in agreeing to the arrangement which had been disavowed by his Majesty.

There is great reason to hope, notwithstanding the unfavourable aspect of the President's speech, that our differences with America may still be accommodated.

#### INDIA.

In our number for last September we noticed the spirit of insubordination which had manifested itself among the officers of the Company's troops on the Madras establishment. This spirit, instead of subsiding, as was expected, arose to such a height that it was found necessary to employ an armed force to repress it. The officers of several of the native regiments induced the troops under their command to seize several fortified places, and to set themselves in direct hostility to the Company's authority.

Such prompt and vigorous measures, however, were taken by the Madras Government, as have completely defeated the designs of the disaffected, and crushed this dangerous insurrection. The particulars have not yet transpired. It is only known,

that the insurgents have been entirely subdued. Lord Minto, the Governor-General, had thought it necessary to repair to Madras on this emergency; but the contest is said to have been at an end before he reached that presidency.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

### PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

THE session of Parliament was opened on the 23d instant, by a Speech, which was read by the Lord Chancellor. It was in substance as follows: viz.

His Majesty laments the calamities which have befallen Austria. She entered into the war with France without any encouragement from his Majesty. His Majesty had nevertheless given all the support in his power to her efforts.

It appeared important at once to destroy the formidable naval armaments and establishments in the Scheldt, and to divert France from reinforcing her armies on the Danube. An expedition was accordingly sent thither; and though its principal ends have not been attained, yet advantages connected with our own security will be found to have resulted from it.

Sweden has made peace with France; but his Majesty had always left her fully at liberty to pursue her own interests in that respect. He trusts that nothing will occur to interrupt the amity between Sweden and Great Britain.

His Majesty's efforts to liberate Portugal have been powerfully aided by the confidence of the Prince Regent, and the co-operation of the local government and people. The expulsion of the French from that country, and the glorious victory of Talavera, have contributed to check the progress of the French in Spain.

The Spanish government have determined to assemble the Cortes of the nation; a measure which, it is hoped, will give fresh animation and vigour to the councils and arms of Spain; whose cause every consideration of policy and good faith binds his Majesty to support; and he relies on the aid of Parliament in so doing.

The intercourse between his Majesty's ambassador and the government of the United States, his Majesty regrets, has been suddenly and unexpectedly interrupted. He has, however, received assurances of a friendly disposition on the part of America, which will be met by a corresponding disposition on his part.

His Majesty has directed the estimates for

the current year to be framed with all possible attention to economy: he greatly regrets the pressure on his subjects which the war renders inevitable.

His Majesty recommends the state of the inferior clergy to the farther consideration of Parliament.

The accounts of the trade and revenue of the country will be found highly satisfactory; the measures directed by France against our commerce having wholly failed of any permanent effect.

"The inveterate hostility of our enemy continues to be directed against this country with unabated animosity and violence. To guard the security of his Majesty's dominions, and to defeat the designs which are meditated against us and our allies, will require the utmost efforts of vigilance, fortitude, and perseverance.

"In every difficulty and danger, his Majesty confidently trusts that he shall derive the most effectual support, under the continued blessing of Divine Providence, from the wisdom of his Parliament, the valour of his forces, and the spirit and determination of his people."

The Address moved was, as usual, an echo to the Speech. An amendment was moved, strongly condemning the conduct of ministers, evidently with no other view than that of discovering the real temper of the house. For this amendment, 92 voted in the House of Lords, while 144 voted against it; leaving a majority of 52 in favour of ministers. In the House of Commons the numbers were, 167 in favour of the amendment, and 268 against it; being a majority of 96. It is to be noted, however, that Lord Sidmouth's party voted against the amendment, on the ground that it went too far, in condemning before inquiry; and this party may be expected to throw its weight in general into the opposition scale. Estimating its numbers in the lower house at 15, this reduces the ministerial majority from 96 to 66: among whom also, it may be presumed, are not a few moderate men, not particularly attached to any party. It is apprehended therefore, by many, that the present administration is too feeble to maintain its ground

long; and this apprehension has been strengthened by a subsequent division in the House of Commons, on a motion made by Lord Porchester for appointing a committee to inquire into the conduct of the Walcheren expedition. This motion was resisted by ministers, as premature; the information promised by his Majesty to the house not having yet been furnished. The house, however, thought differently: 195 voting for the committee of inquiry, and only 186 against it. On this point, however—viz. the stability of administration—we do not pretend to speculate.

#### NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Isle of Bourbon, in the East Indies, surrendered to a squadron of four frigates and a sloop of war, under the command of Commodore Rowley, on the 21st of Septem-

ber. A French frigate, and the Europe and Streatham East-India ships, were found in the harbour, and taken possession of.

Measures of increased severity have been adopted against British commerce by the governments of Denmark and Holland. Bonaparte appears, at the same time, to have greatly relaxed the rigours of his commercial decrees, as they relate to France. He has permitted corn to be freely exported from that country in neutral bottoms; in which may be imported, in exchange, a variety of articles, which are enumerated: and though he professes to exclude the produce and manufactures of Great Britain, yet he must be aware that such a reservation is altogether nugatory. The quantity of corn brought from France to this country has been very large.

#### WARDLE VERSUS F. AND D. WRIGHT, AND MRS. CLARKE.

WE stated in our last number the issue of this trial, and intimated our intention of resuming the subject. Col. Wardle, it will be remembered, had been declared, by the verdict of a jury, liable to pay above 1000*l.* for furniture, supplied by Mr. Wright, for the use of Mrs. Clarke; in consequence of testimony, given by Mrs. Clarke and Mr. Wright's brother, that he had come to Wright's house with that lady, and made himself expressly answerable for it. Mr. Wardle, indignant at this decision, addressed the public in a letter, in which were these words: "There only remains for me now, before God and my country, to declare the verdict was obtained by perjury alone; and I do pledge myself to *prove that fact* the earliest moment the forms of the law will allow me to do so." In commenting on this subject in one of our former numbers, we naturally assumed, in the same manner, indeed, as almost every one else, that Col. Wardle was about to prosecute the witnesses for perjury; their "*perjury*" being the "*fact*" upon which he declared himself at issue with them, and on which, therefore, his intended prosecution would be made to turn. He took, however, another course. He prosecuted, not each for perjury, but the whole together for a conspiracy; by which proceeding, as it seems to us, the perjury became a point merely to be inferred, certainly not the specific crime that was to be punished. Lord Ellenborough seems to have taken great alarm at this mode of proceeding, for a reason which his lordship's own words will best explain. "The defendants might all have been in-

dicted for perjury, which, in truth, is the correct course that ought to have been pursued; and I am not a little alarmed at this new measure of combining in one charge of conspiracy all the witnesses to a transaction, respecting which they have given their testimony on oath. Indictment for conspiracy, in every case, has this hardship belonging to it, that it deprives every individual, included in such indictment, of the power of calling those as witnesses who are combined in the indictment. If witnesses, instead of being questioned, and having their credibility impeached, should be thus combined in one aggregate prosecution, and stripped of the advantage of the evidence of each other, it is a hardship of the most severe nature, and which I shall be very sorry to see imposed again."

But we proceed to the trial.

Col. Wardle, as well as Major Dodd and Col. Glennie, who were present on the occasion of the meeting at Wright's house, severally swore that no engagement or undertaking to pay for the furniture in question had been made: and thus the testimony of Wright's brother, and Mrs. Clarke, and indeed also the oath of Wright himself, the prosecutor in the first cause, stood opposed to that of three new witnesses;—of whom, however, two might have been brought forward in the first cause with much more propriety than in the second. Had the question turned on the preference due to the two sets of contending witnesses, there might have been some difficulty in deciding. On the one hand, Mrs. Clarke certainly was, from general character, de-

serving of little credit;—Wright was interested, since he hoped to gain payment of his bill by the prosecution;—and Wright's brother might be supposed to have some leaning to his relation, who was also his employer, though on the whole a very fit and competent witness. Col. Wardle, on the other hand, was no less interested than Wright;—Major Dodd's testimony, or at least his general character, was in some measure impaired by the circumstance of his being private secretary to the Duke of Sussex at the very time when he was extracting from the Duke of York's mistress anecdotes to the prejudice of his Royal Highness. There is something undoubtedly extremely revolting to the feelings of respectable men, in the idea of a person's enjoying the confidence, and passing continually into the company, of one son of his Sovereign, and being busily occupied, at that very period, in detecting the faults of another son of the same Sovereign, through the medium of a cast-off mistress, with whom he condescended to travel for that purpose. We cannot wonder that Major Dodd has lost his office, and the emoluments of it: he ought himself to have resigned it, antecedently to his taking the path which he has pursued. Col. Glennie's testimony does not appear to us, on the face of the trial, to have been liable to any particular exception. It should, however, be remembered, that his evidence, as well indeed as that of Major Dodd, must necessarily be somewhat less conclusive in its nature than that of the other party, inasmuch as they were brought to prove a negative. The words, or something like the words, affirmed to have been spoken, might have been uttered, and though heard by the one set of witnesses, might not have been equally adverted to by some of the others. We say, therefore, that here was nearly a balance of testimonies; and if it was a balance, we incline to think, that, both from the nature of the trial, and from the circumstance of an antecedent verdict being to be overthrown, the proper course might have been to re-affirm the former decision. Such also seems to have been the opinion of the judge. But a new witness was brought; and his testimony appears to us to have so completely established the propriety of acquitting the persons charged with a conspiracy, that we are not at all surprized at the readiness with which the jury proceeded to their verdict of acquittal. Mr. Stokes, solicitor to Mrs. Clarke—a man of good character, as far as appears, and well acquainted with Mr. Alley, counsel for

the prosecutor—swore, that, he being about to be called up as an evidence before the House of Commons on the part of Col. Wardle, had suggested to the Colonel himself, that it would be better not to call him, inasmuch as he should perhaps be obliged to disclose what he knew of “Mrs. Clarke's being to derive considerable advantages for coming forward upon the investigation;” and that he had also dissuaded the calling of Wright for the same reason. Some of his words, given on oath in the trial, are as follow:—“Col. Wardle said, ‘This is Wright the upholsterer: he is come to be examined by me.’ I said, ‘You surely do not mean to call Wright; for he will, if possible, do you more mischief than myself, as in that case your furnishing Mrs. Clarke's house, and sending him to me, to bring an action against the Duke of York, will certainly come out.’ He said, ‘Then you think I ought not to call him;’” &c. &c. On the production of this unexpected evidence, Col. Wardle was again called, and he gave a testimony in flat contradiction to that of Mr. Stokes. It is impossible, however, to allow this new evidence of Mr. Stokes, and this superadded testimony of Colonel Wardle, to pair off together. Here are now four witnesses against three; and the new witness is a man not at all interested, as we conceive, in the question at issue. He is also remarkably specific, as well as confident, in all that he says.—There is a further circumstance to be considered. It came out, in this and in the former trial, that Colonel Wardle, who is indignant at the idea of his being suspected to have bribed Mrs. Clarke to give her testimony, by engaging to pay her upholsterer's bill for about 1000*l.*, had paid her 100*l.* at one time, and 90*l.* at another; and had procured for her 500*l.* at another; for which last transaction he had been guarantee. Why, then, are we to assume that the man who would supply above 600*l.* would not supply a further 1000*l.*? Where is the great difference between the principle of furnishing the one sum and the other? Moreover, it is observable, that pains were taken to conceal the grant of 500*l.*, another name being interposed for this very purpose. On the whole, then, we may congratulate ourselves, that in this case an English jury has done its duty; and it is important that our countrymen should attend to questions of this description, since the interests both of morality and civil liberty are deeply concerned. It is of great moment that the fountains of justice should be as pure as possible. The due administration of the

law is, after all, the grand security to our freedom; and if witnesses may be bribed to give their evidence, and the bribe given concealed, who can doubt that abundant testimony to almost any point may be purchased? And which of us will then be safe, either in his reputation, his property, his liberty, or even his life? Lord Ellenborough observed, at the close of this trial, that if only the gift of the 100*l.* to Mrs. Clarke had appeared, it would have impeached her testimony before the house; and that if it had appeared before a court of justice, and Mrs. Clarke had sworn untruly, the party giving it would have been subjected to an accusation of subornation of perjury. We cannot do a better service to the community, than by disseminating the knowledge of this wholesome doctrine of the law of England.

A public subscription, in aid of Col. Wardle's expenses in the general prosecution of the affair of the Duke of York, has been opened, and between one and two thousand pounds have already been subscribed. We cannot help deeming this extremely objectionable, on the ground of its being applicable to the purpose of indemnifying Col.

Wardle for the payment of all those sums to Mrs. Clarke of which we have spoken. Surely the watchful guardians of our constitution ought at least to have provided against this use of the sum supplied by the sons of liberty over the kingdom: it ought to have been advertised to be a subscription for indemnifying Col. Wardle for all charges, save and except those which were bribes to Mrs. Clarke for her testimony. Subscriptions for the payment of the expenses of favourite candidates at elections, are commonly declared to be applicable only to the *legal* charges.—We are not of the party of the Duke of York in this business: our opinion, in that respect, stands almost exactly as it did. But we deprecate violence on every side, as well as all unfairness and injustice. We are against all crooked means of pursuing even a right end. The interests, neither of religion, nor of morality, nor of true liberty, are ever served by such a course; and we hope that our readers will not accuse us of deviating too much into politics, by the length to which we have carried our observations on this important topic.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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A FRIEND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT, BUT NOT AN ENEMY TO THE CANDID DISSENTER; ANTIPAPA; INQUISITOR; J. S.; PHILOMEL; R. O. S. G., O. S. G. G.; HISTORICUS; and DELTA; have been received, and are under consideration.

Mr. JOSEPH FOX, secretary to the London Society for promoting the Conversion of the Jews, has requested us to convey the thanks of the Committee of that Society to the Gentleman styling himself "A Well-wisher to Israel," for his Manuscript, being a Reply to David Levi's Dissertation on the Prophecies; and to inform that Gentleman, that the Committee have resolved to publish the same, and have adjudged the Premium of Thirty Guineas to the Author, who is requested to make known to Mr. Fox in what manner he wishes the same to be remitted.

We have received Mr. IVIMEY's paper. He will probably think that his answer ought to be directed rather to the paper on Infant Baptism in our present number, than to that in our number for November.

Mr. Mudford's notice came too late.

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## ERRATUM.

In the present number: p. 13, col. 2, l. 4 from the bottom: After *before*, read *God*.